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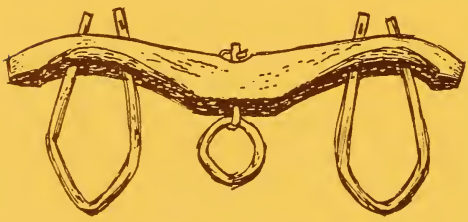

MEMORIAL

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THE CIVIL WAR

An Unvarnished Account
of the Late But Still Lively Hostilities

OTHER BOOKS BY JAMES STREET

The Dabneys:

OH, PROMISED LAND

TAP ROOTS

BY VALOUR AND ARMS

TOMORROW WE REAP

MINGO DABNEY

•

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE

THE BISCUIT EATER

THE GAUNTLET

THE HIGH CALLING

THE VELVET DOUBLET

SHORT STORIES

An Unvarnished Account of the Late But Still Lively Hostilities

THE Civil War

As told by

JAMES STREET

Illustrated by John Alan Maxwell

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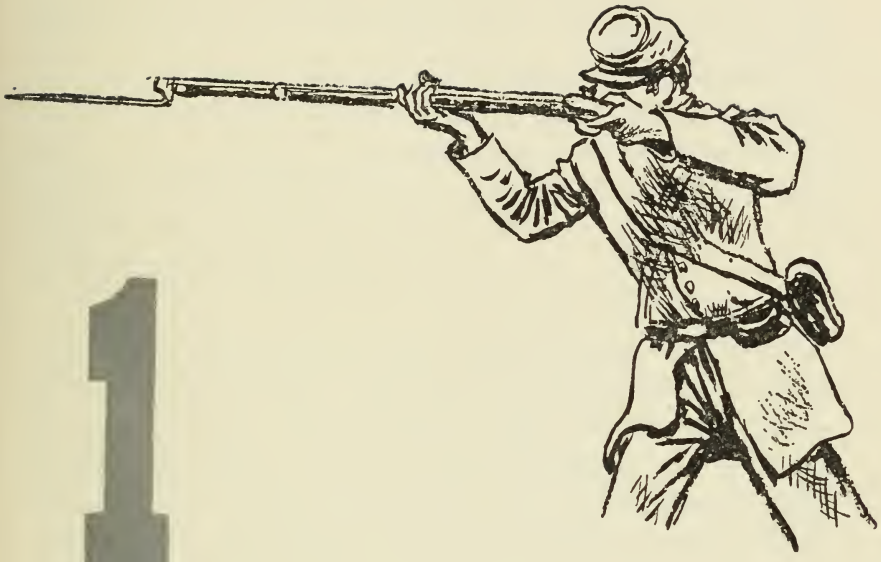
For Ginny and Helen

THE CIVIL WAR



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Almost a hundred years after the first shot was fired, we Americans cannot even agree on a name for our Civil War Between the States, much less on what caused it or exactly what happened.

It was a lapse into national schizophrenia, a monstrous metamorphosis during which Dr. U. S. Jekyll, a pretty good sort, changed himself into two Mr. Hydes who promptly tried to beat each other to death and who really never have forgiven each other although they have shaken hands and smiled for history's photographers.

It was a madness that cost a young country of 31,500,000 people more than 600,000 dead men—an American toll larger than World Wars I and II combined, with the Korean War and a few more thrown in to boot.

It was a family feud that left the South so prostrated she scarcely could breathe and so flat on her back that it took her twenty-five years to get to one knee, fifty years to stand up and seventy-five years to walk without braces; and left the North so bewildered that, in freeing her black brothers from slavery, she put her white brothers in political and economic bondage and thereby bred a bitterness that flares today in books, football games, barroom brawls and Letters-to-the-Editor columns.

It made a martyred demigod of Abraham Lincoln, a melancholy Samaritan who put the Constitution in mothballs long enough to save the Union it had founded, and a scapegoat of Jefferson Davis, a stiff-necked constitutionalist who reluctantly led his people into total war and total desolation and lived to become their symbol of suffering but never of shame.

It made an idol of General R. E. Lee, the vanquished who opposed slavery, and a presidential failure of General U. S. Grant, the victor whose wife owned slaves.

More words have been written about it than any other war. The South still talks about it and the folks know a lot about the Confederacy's battles but almost nothing about its Constitution, its Congress and its courts. The North still devours scads of books about it and has swallowed and perpetrated some of the weirdest myths since King Arthur.

At the height of World War II many of the best-selling novels in our country were about the Civil War. Previously, there had been *Gone With the Wind*. This one reportedly is, world-wide, the most popular novel of the twentieth century and far and away our most popular novel since *In His Steps*, which, incidentally, had to do with Christ and not with the Confederacy at all.

It gave us *The Red Badge of Courage*, a good book about

a Northern foot soldier, and *Surrey of Eagle's Nest*, a romantic hippity-do upon which my generation of Southerners cut eye teeth and few wisdom teeth. These two books may explain a lot, for the Yankee *Red Badge of Courage* tells the horror of a war the North won while the Confederate *Surrey of Eagle's Nest* rhapsodizes the glory of a war which the South lost.

Further, the Civil War—

But hold on. In this essay, I am going to call that struggle the Civil War and before any reader grabs pen and vitriol, I hasten to report that I was born in Mississippi and now live in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. That "War Between the States" ambiguity is an inadequate description and let's face it. Besides, it's phony. We Southerners seldom use it among ourselves but reserve it for public declarations and for hair-splitting harangues with Yankees.

The name of War Between the States came after the fact and, incidentally, was taken from the title of a book, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States*, written by Alexander Stephens, vice-president of the Confederacy.

When the war started, the South couldn't agree on a name —or on anything else much. The names of "War of Independence" and "War for Separation" were sampled and discarded. Finally, "Civil War" was accepted with grimaces and groans, but the South never did like it and still doesn't.

The Confederates who did the bleeding called it "the War." The North called it the "War of Rebellion," "the Civil War" and several others. I prefer "Civil War." Saves type.

It gave us *Dixie*, the South's fight song written by a Yankee, and *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, the North's anthem based on a southern plantation chant.

It gave us ironclads and torpedoes, Scarlett O'Hara and

Little Eva, our first attempt at air power and our first income tax.

It revolutionized the science and art of mass slaughter from tactics to ships to arms, taught us how to wage wars through conscription and to finance them by popular bond issues. It made Negroes free men but not citizens and then sired the Fourteenth Amendment that did. It also sired the Ku Klux Klan and changed the handy carpet bag from a traveling kit into a badge of ignominy.

It brought a scourge of graft, scandals and suicides, split American Protestantism, made a flock of millionaires and sent brothers and cousins against one another in 2,261 battles, including one each in New York, Vermont, Illinois, Utah, Idaho and Washington Territory; two in Nevada, four in Oregon, six in California, six in Minnesota, nineteen in New Mexico, 298 in Tennessee and 519 in Virginia. The average was better than a battle a day for four years.

Its issue of State's Rights is with us still and as late as 1952 helped elect—now hear this—helped elect a *Republican* president.

It created more fables than Aesop, ranging from the five Bixby heroes of Lincoln's immortal letter and Barbara Frietchie to General Forrest's "git thar fust etc.," none of which is true.

It made us think we are the best fighters in the world, indicating we may have confused ferocity with ability. It gave us new words for our language and sayings that have become commonplace: "That government of the people, by the people etc."—"War is hell"—"Like Grant took Richmond"—"Unconditional surrender"—"Hold the fort"—"Damn the torpedoes" and "Damyankees."

It shattered the axiom that cotton is king and proved the

axiom that a good big man can whip a good little man although it took 395,528 Union lives to prove it, including 267 by court martial, 391 by suicide, 313 by sunstroke and 520 murdered.

There is no telling how many Southerners were killed. The figure 258,000 generally is accepted, but many of the South's skimpy records were lost in pyres that burned for four years over thousands and thousands of miles, and left the land so barren that, as the saying goes, even the crows had to carry their own food when they flew over it and only the vultures got fat.

Records? The South didn't even have ink for her living to write with, much less to record her dead.

Sir Winston Churchill said it was the last great war between gentlemen. Sir Winston perhaps was thinking of Petersburg where a Maine regiment of nine hundred lost almost seven hundred dead in seven minutes. No machine guns, no grenades, no flame-throwers, no tanks; just gentlemen killing gentlemen, clawing out eyes and batting out brains.

Or Antietam, maybe? There the 3rd North Carolina lost 90 per cent of its men. Or Gettysburg when the 1st Minnesota lost 82 per cent while Company F of the 6th North Carolina was losing 100 per cent, thus sustaining that state's boast that she furnished more privates and fewer generals to the Confederacy than any of her sisters.

Could Sir Winston have been thinking of Franklin, Tennessee, where Hood's Southerners lost six thousand men, two major generals, nine brigadiers and forty-five regimental commanders in one futile charge after another? Or Virginia in May and June of 1864 when Grant's casualties totaled almost the size of Lee's army that inflicted the losses?

At Waterloo, the Allies lost 20 per cent of their effectives,

but the price bought the dissolution of the French army. At Gettysburg, the Union also lost 20 per cent but the Confederate army remained intact. The French army lost 31 per cent at Waterloo and melted away. The Union army lost 30 per cent at Chickamauga and came back strong enough to take Atlanta. The victory at Chickamauga cost the Confederates 27 per cent casualties and the victory at Antietam cost the Union 23 per cent; and both sides kept on fighting.

Gentlemen indeed! A holiday for butchers as testified by a generation of men whose wooden legs echoed on the sidewalks of a thousand towns, whose canes tapped a way for sightless eyes. Some orators, usually seeking votes and a public paycheck, have called it our nation's most glorious hour. Balderdash. It was our dirtiest, and surely our most stupid.

This holocaust has been blamed on slavery, State's Rights, the protective tariff, free soil, Yankee mendacity, Southern treason, sun spots, the dictates of God and the Revelation of Saint John. For many years the wise men accepted it as a dog-eat-dog carnage between Northern capitalism and Southern agrarianism. More and more, however, historians are swinging to the idea that a moral issue was paramount, and the moral issue was slavery.

The question of secession, itself an incredible blunder, had been a hair-splitting issue since New England threatened to leave the Union in 1814. It was not a sectional doctrine. As late as 1857 New England considered secession; and when the shooting started, the mayor of New York agitated for his people to forsake the United States and form a neutral city.

The Constitution and Bill of Rights, largely the fruit of Southern minds, did not forbid secession. The Constitution formed a family of states and did not define their rights, but defined the rights of the family. It is an odds-on bet that had

the Constitution interfered with the so-called sovereign rights of the states then the Constitution never would have been ratified in the first place, for every state, North and South, made a fetish of sovereignty in the early days. To a degree, a similar situation exists in the United Nations of today. The United Nations has a Charter (Constitution) that has been approved by all members, but let the United Nations tamper with the sovereignty of any of the powerful nations (states) and the whole shebang will blow up.

The North itself was split a dozen different ways on secession and so was the South. As late as 1861 an Alabama farmer wrote his son in Mississippi:

"It was disgusting to me to think that I had Raised a child that would Cecede from under the government that he was born and raised under. Tha have got you puft up with Cecessionism as tight as a tode. I dont See what you nede to Care for. you hant got no Slaves."

The son replied:

"Henry Bell Is my Name and fite I will before I will submit to black republican princibles lose my life I will first."

The chances are he lost it.

Secession? A fie for constitutional double-talk and legalistic gnat-straining. The weakness of the Constitution was rising like oil on water. It had not united the states but had tied them together with string; cotton string. Destiny is greater than men. The deified founding fathers, whose names now are whispered in awe by the courts or shouted from the hustings, had provided for State's Rights and the chickens had come home to roost, and the rooster to crow and fight.

Alexander Stephens of Georgia, one of Lincoln's few friends when they served together in Congress and later vice-president of the Confederacy, was a militant anti-secessionist.

Jefferson Davis himself had grown lukewarm toward the premise that any state had a right to go into business for herself.

The time had come for the United States to decide whether it was going to be a bunch of Balkan states or a world power. We were almost ready for the Major League of nations. We were on second base. The idea was to reach third even if we had to spike the umpire and break every rule of the game.

Therefore, secession was a link in the chain that swung us into civil war, a big link, but only one of many.

Slavery? Most Southerners not only did not own slaves, but many of them were dead set against the institution. The Abolitionist movement was born in the South. The long-heads (now called eggheads) realized the economic stupidity of the system, but press, pulpit and bar—the cheerleaders for the status quo—tagged such thinkers as radicals and trouble-makers. Many were the backwoods preachers who railed against slavery on moral grounds. They were called crackpots and ignorant prophets of the unwashed. Many of the big-shot clergymen and lawyers apologized for slavery as the will of God or the will of the law. It just so happened that their communicants and clients also held for the status quo.

The South was not pro-slavery any more than the North was anti-slavery. Hence, slavery as such was only another link in the chain. But listen. The Negro himself was several links and was far more powerful than the institution which kept him in bondage.

The South's poor whites were afraid of the Negro.

It was the consuming and frustrating fear of what would happen if all Negroes were freed and became first-class citizens. Slavery was the check rein that kept the Negro in tow. The fear of millions of free Negroes was fed in gulps to the

non-slavers, the po'whites, the red necks. Freedom means political equality and political equality will mean social equality, so they said. The Negro will go to your schools. Your churches. They will take your jobs. Marry your sister.

These shibboleths were raised and the forty-acre-and-a-mule Southerner shuddered. Should a tide of free Negroes rise in the South, then the rich folks could get out. The poor would have to take it. I believe that John Doe, Southerner, fundamentally was opposed to slavery, but was more opposed to freedom for all Negroes, and was terrified by the planted thought that his state might become a "black" republic and was killing mad at the possibility that a Negro legally might come into his living room, then his dining room, and then his bedroom.

A Georgia editor wrote that slavery made "the poor man respectable" and gave the poor "an elevated position in society that they would not otherwise have."

And it had its effect. In the mountains of western North Carolina and east Tennessee where Negroes were as rare as Democrats, a spokesman sounded off: "To prevent this [equality] we are willing to spare the last man, down to the point where women and children begin to suffer for food and clothing; where these begin to suffer and die, rather than see them equalized with an inferior race we will die with them."

Under all of this, however, was a moral issue that fear and law and money could not subdue. Slavery was wrong and the South knew it. It was a dirty neck and a visible sin on those who held up their arms in righteous supplication and spoke platitudes about political cleanliness and spiritual godliness.

The North, with the inherent tactlessness of Yankees then and now, was pointing a finger and ignoring her own dirty fingernail. So the South, to appease a gnawing conscience,

pointed to Yankee slums, to wage slaves, to child labor, to beggars and crime. They both were so right, and so wrong. The pot was so busy calling the kettle black that they both boiled over.

And yet slavery did not shove us into civil war. It was a pit along our national path which, sooner or later, we would either have to fill in or fall in. Let's put it this way: slavery was a cannon aiming at our heads. But it was not the fuse, and without the fuse the cannon might never have gone off.

Then what was the immediate cause for our attempt at national suicide? Because two opposing but comparatively small pressure groups were determined to have their way. They were the Northern high-tariff industrialists who wanted to buy in an open market and sell in a closed market, and the Southern cotton nabobs who wanted to buy and sell in a free market.

The industrialist wanted government help and you can call it subsidy, welfare or anything you like. The Southerner wanted free enterprise.

The Abolitionist, zealous and vocal, didn't cut much ice at first, but when the North needed a shot in the arm the battle-cry of freedom was raised and the struggle became a crusade to liberate the Negro.

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord—"

The South, bled white and suffering from the moral and economic cancer of slavery, didn't have a chance.

As an upright line of dominoes falls when the first one is toppled, so began the Civil War. The year was 1860. The Roman Catholic Church had adopted the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin only six years before. The Light Brigade had charged at Balaclava. The

first train had crossed the Mississippi River. The first petroleum well had been opened at Titusville, Pennsylvania. John Brown had raided Harper's Ferry to launch a slave revolt, and his hanged body was moldering in the grave. In New York a minstrel man from Ohio by the name of Dan Emmett sat himself down and wrote a little jig song and called it *Dixie*.

Yes, the year was 1860. The Democratic Party broke into splinters in a squabble between Northern apologists for slavery and Southern firebrands. The Democrats had not elected a Southerner to the White House since James Knox Polk. (The next *real* Southerner in the presidency was to be Harry S. Truman. Don't holler, boys. Just read the record. Yes, I know that Woodrow Wilson was born in Virginia, but he was not a real Southerner any more than Kentucky-born Abraham Lincoln was a real Southerner.)

The Democratic Convention blew sky high and the South, aware that it was going to be outvoted by Yankee Democrats, seceded from the convention and set up their own party of Dixiecrats. They nominated John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. The Northern Democrats nominated Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. Then John Bell of Tennessee came out on a Constitutional Union ticket, pulling his support from Southern Whigs and disgruntled Democrats.

The Republican party, organized only six years before on a promise for a new deal, nominated Abraham Lincoln and adopted a catch-all platform of protective tariff, federal aid to railroads and free soil in the West. The Republican slogan for the campaign was "Vote Yourself a Farm."

Lincoln made no speeches. The party bosses kept him under wraps and more or less under cover. The propagandists began to build the myths and Mr. Lincoln sat on his front porch in Springfield, Illinois and talked to the folks who came to see him.

He had declared publicly that he was not an Abolitionist and that he reckoned white men ought to have more sense than to bash one another in the head over Negro slavery. He believed that Congress did not have the constitutional power to interfere with slavery in the states. He was born in the South, in Kentucky. He liked turnip greens.

Then why did the South distrust him? Because he was a Republican and the South had come to associate Republicans with Abolitionists and Radicals. The South's blue-stocking clique (and they were running things) was ultra-conservative although the barefooted folks had a tendency to jump the traces, as Andrew Jackson had proved. The Southerner up at the forks of the creek was a revolutionary on most things except the Negro question, and when it came to the Negro he got on a horse and rode off in all directions.

Abraham Lincoln really wanted a new deal with the same deck. So did most Southerners. But Lincoln was a Republican, and the very word Republican was synonymous with Negro, and all the problems of Pandora. The press, the pulpit and the lawyers had done their job well. John Doe, Southerner, thought his cabin was dependent upon the planter's mansion. He didn't like it, but he aimed to stay a free white man in a white man's country.

So to the tune of *Yankee Doodle*, he was singing:

Yankee Doodle is a knave,
And everybody knows it,
And swindling is his natural trade,
For by his tricks he shows it.
He'll go to church and sing and pray,
Be full of grace on Sunday,
With wooden hams and paper shoes,
He'll cheat you on a Monday.

Out of New Hampshire came the five singing Hutchinsons, chanting:

Steeped in infamous corruption,
Sold to sugar-cane and cotton,
Lo! a nation's heart is rotten,
And the vampires suck her blood;
O'er our broad and free dominions
Rules the Cotton King whose minions
Clip our fearless eagle's pinions,
And invite Oppression's reign.

Silly? Don't kid yourself. Congress was writing laws, but the people were singing songs and you see what happened.

The North thought the average Southerner was a planter's son, a haughty slaver who never had read a book or thought seriously about things cultural. Dear, dear.

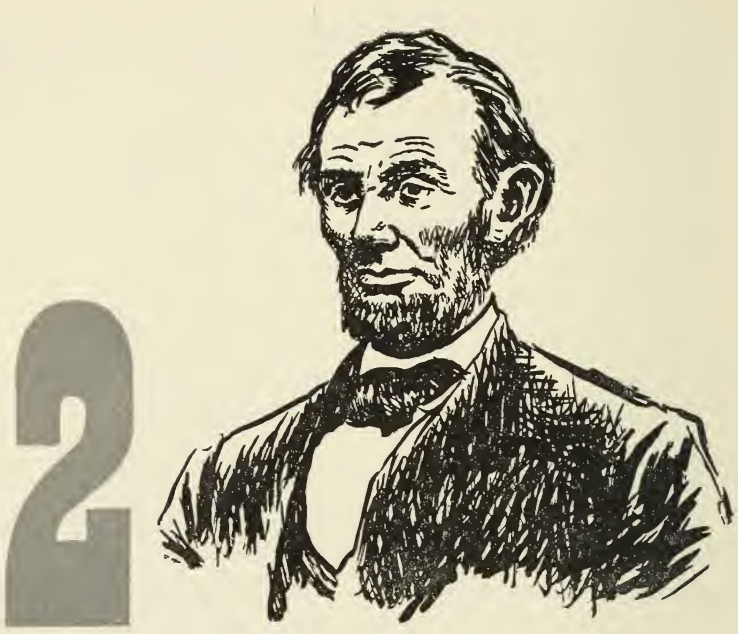
Actually, the typical Southerner was a poor boy from a little farm. He didn't think highly of the big planters either, but listened to them at first because they were so elegant and used such pretty words. However, he didn't aim to take much lip from the aristocrats, and not a frazzling bit from the Yankees.

The South thought the average Northerner was a rascal with a blue nose and a yellow belly, threatening the sacred hearth of an English-Scotch-Irish people whose hearths were their altars.

Actually, the typical Northerner was a mill hand who looked on his boss about like the Southerner looked on the big planter, or a farmer who didn't trust city slickers and who knew nothing about Negroes. He reckoned he wouldn't take any sass from the big-city muckety-mucks, and not a mite from those stuck-up Southerners.

Really there was little difference between the boy from Georgia and the boy from Indiana, except one raised cotton and the other raised hay.

Together they raised Hell.



Abraham Lincoln was elected president by a minority popular vote, polling fewer votes than the Democratic Party—but remember the Democrats had two candidates. Had the Democrats united behind Candidate Douglas or Candidate Breckinridge they would have swept the Republicans, and Lincoln, back under the bed with the moribund Whigs. Lincoln polled 1,866,352 votes, Douglas 1,375,157 and Breckinridge 845,763.

Congress remained Democratic, but our first Republican president was elected by a coalition of votes so weird and diverse that it was not equaled until Franklin D. Roosevelt and *his* new deal came to power.

The gaunt and gauche Lincoln of myths and martyrdom has become such a god in our Valhalla that any attempt to humanize him usually brings scorn, and any criticism of him

brings partisan outcries. To me, he walks shoulder to shoulder with Thomas Jefferson as our greatest American. Nevertheless, the tinsel that his idolaters have draped on this oak is disgusting and ridiculous. So let's push aside the trappings and take a gander at the man.

He was born in a log cabin in 1809. So what? Most backwoods kids of those days were born in log cabins. His father was shiftless and illiterate. Again so what. There were an awful lot of no-good bums among our pioneering ancestors. His mother, Nancy Hanks, was illegitimate, a "natural child" as some have called her. Even that was not a distinction. The morals of our backwoodsmen often were as crude as their tools, as unconventional as their shouting and frothing religions. The momists of our day prate about Lincoln's love for his mother. Sorry, but I won't swallow that without gagging just a little bit. The boy was only nine years old when his mother died. The women who really influenced his life were his stepmother, who had gumption, and his wife, who had gall.

His stepmother was Sarah Johnston, a widow with three children. Let's take no glory from Nancy Hanks, but for goodness sakes let's give a little bit to the widow Johnston.

As for Lincoln's boyhood, it almost is impossible to separate myth and truth. The product of a cussing, drinking and God-shouting culture, he didn't cuss or drink or join the church. He liked girls, but never allowed himself to get involved. The Ann Rutledge story does not hold water.

The family wandered up through Indiana and eventually to Illinois. Lincoln and his father did not get along and as soon as he was on his own he left home. He did go down to New Orleans on a flatboat, but the story of the slave auction

and his vow to "hit that thing [slavery] and hit it hard" is thoroughly untrustworthy.

Still in his early twenties and at New Salem, Illinois, he was made postmaster and deputy surveyor. He was only twenty-five when he was elected to the Legislature as a Whig. Now what have we got here? Lincoln had split rails, farmed, worked in a store—all commonplace tasks for boys and young men of his day. But already he was in politics (postmaster and deputy surveyor) and was even in the State Legislature. He had been to the Black Hawk War. Here was no provincial hayseed. He had traveled all the way to New Orleans and that was quite a trip in those days.

The truth of the matter is that Abraham Lincoln was a master politician from the very beginning and a man who got around. Reams of bosh have been written about his anti-slavery attitudes, but as a state legislator and a Whig leader he took the position that slavery was "founded on both injustice and bad policy, but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than abate its evils."

These words are a torch in the Lincoln labyrinth through which historians, sobsisters, poets and playwrights have led us for a hundred years. The words simply mean what they say: that slavery was wrong but that abolition was wronger. Take it any way you like, it is compromise and logical incompatibility. Abraham Lincoln was a white man's man.

He was never a "starving" lawyer. Soon after he got his license he formed a partnership with John Todd Stuart, a prominent Whig of influential family and connections.

His clients included such companies as the Illinois Central Railroad and the McCormick Reaper Company, in whose service he met Edwin Stanton, who was to be his Secretary of War.

Lincoln often has been pictured as a gangling trial lawyer defending abused people by shrewd tricks and cracker-barrel philosophies. He was a shrewd lawyer; very shrewd—shrewd enough to know that the cracker barrel was our nation's strongest political platform. His shrewdness, honesty, humility, invective and humor made him a success in rural courts. His claw-hammer mind and his ability to cut through legalistic mumbo-jumbo and get to the heart of a matter made him a success in the higher courts, including the Federal Court of faraway Cincinnati.

Actors who portray him roll his words in resonant beauty. Yet the chances are his voice was as flat as a Kentucky buttercake and, at times, rose to the nasal twang of central Illinois. It might come as a surprise to some Northerners that, to Southerners, *they* have the strange accent and we get as big a kick out of it as Yankees get out of ours and we poke just as much fun at it. I will be jeered for this, but I will be jeered anyway—so here goes: I have a hunch that Lincoln's voice was something like Harry Truman's, a midwestern twang on a southern base.

The romance and marriage of Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd have become a county fair, including the merry-go-round and shoot-the-chute, for amateur psychiatrists. Mary Todd also was a Kentuckian. (Her brother-in-law was a Confederate general.)

The lady was a shrew. Her will power was stronger than her brain and she was an ambitious, driving, nagging female and the two things that will drive a moody man, such as Lincoln, to distraction are a nagging wife and a smoking fireplace. He stood her up once after the wedding date had been set. There seems no doubt about that. And then he married her in considerable haste on November 4, 1842.

Another of his law partners, the letter-writing and gossipy William H. Herndon, wrote in all seriousness, but with no evidence, that Lincoln went through a period of insanity before his marriage. He was "as crazy as a loon"—so wrote Herndon. Sheer verbiage. It was the custom of the day to attribute eccentricities to insanity. (Later, it was to be said that Sherman had lost his mind.)

Maybe Abraham Lincoln just didn't want to get married. It happens every day. But he did get married, and, in a way, it was one of the best day's work he ever did, for Mary Todd whiplashed his ambition and rubbed on him a polish that was to serve him well.

There seems no doubt that there was some violent emotional disturbance in his life about this time and he was in the throes of depression and excessive morbidity. Death and darkness were the constant companions of our forebears and it is no wonder that they talked about them a lot and feared them in superstitious and unnatural awe. Lincoln was no exception. He was a product of his day and his land.

The Whigs sent him to Congress in 1847 and he was no great shakes of a congressman. He opposed the Mexican War and made a speech that was to haunt him, saying that any people or "a majority of any portion of such people" had the right to "shake off the existing government, and form a new one."

His stand on the Mexican War enraged some folks out in Illinois and they called him another Benedict Arnold. As a congressman, he proposed the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia but only on three conditions: gradual emancipation, compensation to the slaveholders and a popular referendum. He was conservative to the core on this occasion and was playing it safe.

He was a nationally known Whig by this time, but was so unpopular in Illinois that his party dared not let him speak for the ticket out there during the campaign of 1848. He stumped in New England and although his party won the presidency by electing Zachary Taylor (whose daughter had married Jefferson Davis) the Whigs were beaten in Lincoln's own district and this was taken as a repudiation of the congressman.

Lincoln figured he was through in politics and sadly he left the Washington scene and went back to Springfield and to his law practice. The Republican Party was founded a few years later and he sort of sidled into that camp because the Democrats were decadent and the Whigs were dead. His fundamental liberalism began to inch to the fore. He advocated more civil liberties and the broadening of the political base to include more and more of the masses. He began to speak out for labor and even favored woman's suffrage. He soon was the leading Republican of Illinois and almost was nominated for vice-president in 1856. Two years later he was nominated for the Senate and this was the campaign in which he opposed Democrat Stephen A. Douglas. He lost the election but made himself famous in one speech: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other."

Two years later the Republicans nominated him for president in a mess of back-stage maneuvering in which Lincoln did not participate although surely he knew about it. South Carolina announced that if he were elected she would leave the family.

And there it was.

A liberal and a humanitarian, yes—but first, last and always Abraham Lincoln was a Unionist and was capable of using a cold deck, a blackjack and a pistol to preserve the Union. His position was crystal-clear in a statement to editor Horace Greeley: "If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it; if I could save the Union by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

These were the words of the Emancipator, the statesman who grew where a politician was spawned, the neurotic-depressive who feared death and gave his life that his country might not commit suicide; the noblest of his era whose words now sound sweet on Southern tongues and to most Southern ears.

Here was a man who was for the underdog. And that's fine, but it is well to remember that the underdog can be just as vicious and greedy as the top-dog. Here was a man who really believed in "The People." That, too, is fine. But the people, leaderless and frightened, can be a mob. Here was a man who believed that the right to success must not be denied to any man. It is the blessed American doctrine, but we often forget that whereas we must not take from any man the right to succeed we also must not take from him the right of failure.

For my money, W. E. Woodward explained Lincoln best when he wrote:

> Unquestionably his personality is difficult to understand. He was not dominated by his capacity for cheerful frankness, by any means. There was something extremely shrewd and subtle about him. That statement does not mean to imply that he was a

> hypocrite, which he was certainly not. He was entirely sincere and entirely honest, but his sincerity expressed itself in subtle maneuvers. He was like a pair of Siamese twins, each of whom has a totally different set of abilities. One twin can change the color of a card before your very eyes while the other one has the gawky look of a country bumpkin who has come to see the wonders of a county fair. Yet both twins have the same bloodstream and are really one person.

But in 1860, the South, more militant than wise, did not trust Mr. Lincoln or the coalition that put him in power, the new deal Republicans, the high tariff industrialists, the socialistic Free Soilers, the anti-Catholic Know Nothings and the fanatical Abolitionists of John Brown's stripe.

The Democrats still controlled Congress and the Dred Scott Decision had favored the South, although some other slavery decrees had gone against her. Secession would block the South from further expansion in continental United States and, if successful, might make Dixie into a cotton patch for England's mills.

However, the South was convinced that the North was inching her to the end of a limb and soon would cut it off, and a thing was true in those days that still is true: if you grab the South where the hair is short, she will fight.

South Carolina pulled out first, and mighty soon after Lincoln's election. Five other states followed in rapid succession —Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana and Florida. The decisions to secede were by no means unanimous. Even Texas hesitated, with Sam Houston fighting to keep his state in the Union.

The slave states of Tennessee, Virginia, Arkansas, Missouri and North Carolina looked over the secession bargain, but wouldn't buy it at first. The slave states of Kentucky, Maryland and Delaware never even went shopping.

It may sound cockeyed in these days, but in those days many Southerners argued that the North should secede. Henry Wise of Virginia put it this way: "Logically the Union belongs to those who have kept, not those who have broken, its covenants."

If he had to fight, Virginian Wise wanted to fight "with the Star Spangled Banner in one hand and my musket in the other." He didn't want any "Southern cross or any palmetto" for his flag.

Georgia's Alexander Stephens made more sense than most folks when he said: "War is almost certain and will come because there are not virtue, patriotism and sense enough left in the country to avoid it."

Things were rushing to a head. President-elect Lincoln sat on his porch in Springfield and said nothing. President Buchanan kept trying to patch the crumbling fence, but his hands were tied. He was in the same position that Herbert Hoover, Republican, was in during the paralyzing interval between Hoover's defeat and the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Democrat.

There were many plans to save the Union without bloodshed, but everybody seemed to get in his own little red wagon and ride off in his own way. There was no acceptable leadership. Maybe Lincoln should have spoken, but he kept rocking.

Meanwhile, the first Confederate States of America was organized at Montgomery, Alabama on February 4, 1861. There were only six states in that confederacy—South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida.

Texas came in on February 23 and all of this happened *before* Lincoln became president.

A Confederate Constitution was adopted and this is a most intriguing document. It was an out and out rewrite of the Constitution of the United States but with certain clarifications that our Constitution needs today. The twelve amendments of the original Constitution were put into the text of the Confederate constitution. The name of God, absent in our Constitution, was put into the Preamble of the Confederate document.

It provided that the president and vice-president should serve for terms of six years and were ineligible for reelection. (Shades of all the third-term hullabaloo.)

The Confederate president would have the right to veto separate items in an appropriation bill. (This we could use today.)

If a President removed from office any man except Cabinet members and diplomats, he must report his reasons to the Senate.

Cabinet members could have seats upon the floor of Congress to discuss the business of their departments. (We need this today.)

No law could relate to more than one subject and that subject must be clearly defined in the title of the law.

The Post Office Department must be self-sufficient.

The foreign slave trade was prohibited in unmistakable language. Some Southern partisans have claimed the Confederate constitution provided for the abolition of slavery. That's absurd.

Come on, let's face it. The Confederate constitution was, in most cases, an improvement upon our original Constitution

which was clumsy and ambiguous, and still is unwieldy and loop-holey in spots.

For its flag, the Confederacy adopted the Stars and Bars. It had two red stripes and one white stripe, and its stars, equal to the number of states, were in a circle on a field of blue. This flag soon was abolished because, in battle, it was confused too easily with the Stars and Stripes. The Confederate flag that we see today was not the Stars and Bars at all. It was the Battle Flag.

At the Alabama convention where the first Confederacy was founded, a German bandmaster named Herman Arnold realized that a song was needed. His band kept tooting away on a sad little thing called *The Bonnie Blue Flag*. Nobody paid it much mind. It was then that the bandmaster remembered a minstrel ditty he had heard, a gay tune called *Dixie*. He scored it into martial music and cut loose. Not many of us today have heard *Dixie* as our grandpas heard it. It was scored for brass and rumbling trombones. The great Toscanini, on a tour of the South, played *Dixie* as it should be played.

The Confederacy, as do all governments, had right and left wing extremists. Neither of these elements was strong enough to elect a president. So they looked around for a middle-ground man and found him in Jefferson Davis, the most neglected man of American biographies.

"We'll hang Jeff Davis to a sour apple tree—"

Just who was this man whose name caused the North to froth at the mouth? And if secession and slavery were sins, why should he take on his drooping shoulders all the sins of all his people?

Like Lincoln, Jeff Davis was born in poverty in Kentucky and, still like Lincoln, his father was shiftless and maybe a little ornery. About the time the Lincolns were migrating

north, the Davis family was migrating south and settled in Mississippi. There was an elder son named Joe, and Joe Davis had get up and get, and made a fortune in law and cotton.

Jefferson (the family called him Jeffy) was the tenth child of the brood, and rich elder brother Joe took him to his bosom and decided that Jeffy would have all the advantages Brother Joe had missed. This, in a way, was a tragedy, this gentle tyranny of a pampering brother.

The child was lonely, sensitive and shy and at the age of seven, yes, seven! he was separated from his folks and was sent back to Kentucky to a Roman Catholic seminary. The Davises were Baptists, but the impressionable boy began to lean toward Catholicism and the family fetched him home.

While Lincoln was digging for his education, Jeffy was in Kentucky's Transylvania College studying Greek, Latin, mathematics and philosophy. He was only sixteen when, through Brother Joe's influence, he was appointed to West Point. The boy simply had had no home life and the only emotional security he had known had come from the priests at the seminary. This would have been rough going even for a phlegmatic child. It was poison for the high-strung boy.

He entered the army upon graduation from West Point and served lonely tours at remote posts. He and Lincoln both did stints in the Black Hawk "War." The legend that they met during that fiasco won't stand up.

The brightest spot in Davis' early life was his courtship of Sarah Knox Taylor, daughter of Zachary Taylor, then a colonel and later to be a general and president. Old Zach didn't like Jeffy and forbade the marriage. However, Lieutenant Davis told his colonel to go whistle up a stump and married the girl. (The best legend about Taylor concerns the

time he refused the letter that informed him of his presidential nomination because postage was due on the message.)

After his spat with the colonel and his marriage to the colonel's daughter, Davis quit the army and took his bride to Mississippi. She was dead within three months of malaria.

For ten years thereafter, Jefferson Davis devoted his time to the Mississippi River plantation he had helped hack out of a wilderness. He owned slaves. His overseer was a slave, and master and overseer worked side by side in the fields with the other hands.

It was during these farming years that Davis' character jelled. Way down deep, he wanted to go back to the army, for that was his real love, but he was too proud to bend his neck and ask to be taken back.

He was as humorless as Calvin Coolidge was to be. As professorial as Woodrow Wilson. His ego was matched only by that of General George McClellan and surpassed only by General Douglas MacArthur.

But Davis' ego must not be confused with conceit. It was bigger than that. He seemed to be a man of absolute assurance, sometimes of infuriating assurance, but this could have been a front for his shyness. He was so formal he could not even bring himself to call his slaves by nicknames. His overseer was James and never Jim.

All of his life, this man had yearned to take off his shoes and wade in the creek with the boys but he didn't know how; and so he laced his shoes tighter and polished them brighter.

In 1845, he married blue-stockinged and red-blooded Varina Howell. She was quite a girl and it's a shame that years later she talked too much and quoted her husband as having told her during the blackest days of the Confederacy: "If I could take one wing of the army and Lee the other, I think

we could between us wrest a victory from those people." It made him look silly and he wasn't silly. (Good heavens, can't a man even brag to his wife? Can't a president do a little pillow-talking?)

His marriage to Varina Howell moved him from the ranks of the new rich into the "aristocracy," whatever that's worth. Then he, like Lincoln, served in the national House of Representatives.

The Mexican War made Jefferson Davis famous. It gave him a chance to return to the army and he organized a Mississippi regiment and served under General Taylor, his former father-in-law. Apparently they got along all right.

At the Battle of Buena Vista, Davis' regiment and an artillery battery commanded by a young soldier named Braxton Bragg saved our side from probable defeat. Davis was wounded in the foot and overnight he became a national hero. This didn't do him any good. He began to believe the plaudits and seemed never to realize that the plaudits were pretty hollow because we had to strain awful hard to get a genuine hero out of the Mexican War.

Buena Vista convinced Col. Jefferson Davis that he was some pumpkins as a soldier. Too bad. For again let's face facts —that battle was a snarled, jumbled mess and our side was second rate, almost as second rate as the bewildered Mexicans. It wasn't that Davis really was good at Buena Vista; he simply was better than an average which was powerful low.

Army politics reduced Davis' command to a minor force and again he resigned from the army, this time to become a senator. He was one of ten senators who fought California's admission into the Union.

President Franklin Pierce appointed him Secretary of War and here Davis was at his best. He looked toward Mexico and

Cuba as possible areas for national expansion and when he couldn't get to first base on that he pushed for expansion of our trade with Asia. It was he who maneuvered the administration into the Gadsden Purchase which gave us more land in the Southwest and then he planned a railroad along the southern route to California. It was he who introduced camels into the army for use on the Western deserts.

When Buchanan became president, Davis went back to the Senate. Here he defended slavery, but was by no means a loud-mouth secessionist. He was a realist. In his world, property and the rights of property were the natural order. His world contained the gentry, the white peasant and the black slave.

He was in the Senate when South Carolina announced that if Lincoln were elected she would secede. Davis urged caution and discouraged secession. He had an idea that the South, as a social and economic unit, should be a nation within the Union, a sort of a dominion as Canada later was to be within the British Empire.

But when Mississippi seceded, Davis joined his state. He was not a Mississippian in the sense that Lee was a Virginian. Davis was a Southern nationalist. He had lived all over the country and really had no roots. By this time he was a tired, ailing man, plum' tuckered out. Nervous indigestion and neuralgia pestered him constantly and blindness threatened from an eye disease.

He believed from the very first that secession meant war. Some Southerners didn't. But Davis never deliberately kidded his people. He saw the situation as it was: that war was coming. He really hoped to lead the South's armies and was flabbergasted when the Confederacy made him president as a

compromise between the fire-eating leftists and the cold-water rightists.

Put the two presidents side by side and you will see that Davis had knowledge while Lincoln had good common sense.

Lincoln would stoop to help the underdog. Davis would toss him a dollar but could not stoop.

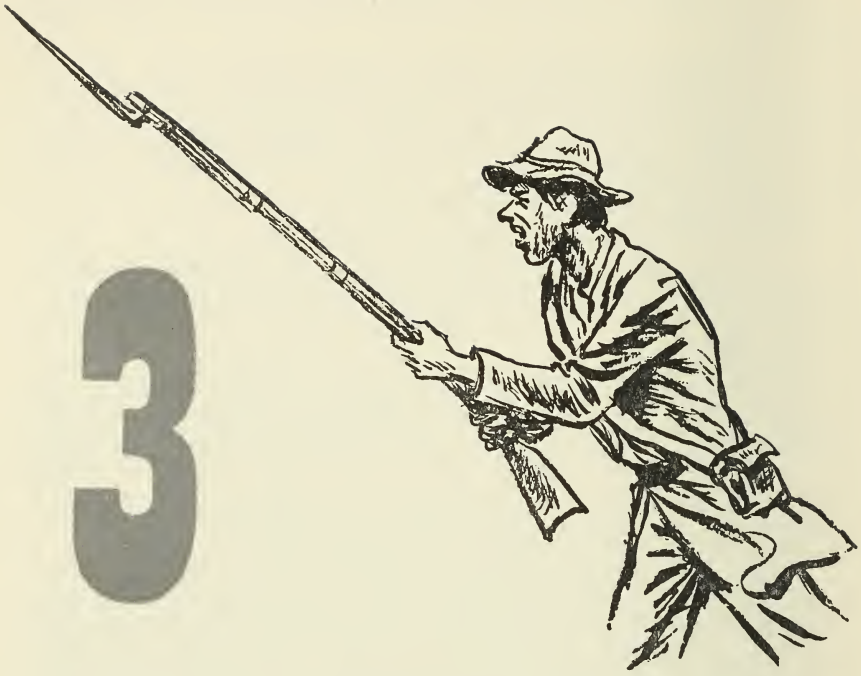
Davis was irascible. Lincoln was patient.

Lincoln could laugh. Davis not only never enjoyed a belly-laugh, but would not even allow himself to weep; the release of a good cry.

These were the men; but even before Lincoln became president of the United States of America, the Confederate States of America was in business as a government. The idea wasn't to prevent fracture of the Union. The Union *was* dissolved. Lincoln's job was to patch it together again.

And in this weird, fantastic hour, we were led by two remarkable neurotics—Abraham Lincoln who had a strange fear of death, and Jefferson Davis who had a strange fear of life.

3



Fort Sumter was a graceless hulk of masonry in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, and Charleston was the most important Confederate port between Norfolk, Virginia and New Orleans, Louisiana. No one seriously thought that the Confederacy long would tolerate a "foreign" garrison at the mouth of Charleston harbor. It was something like a Southern garrison on Governor's Island in New York harbor.

Even before Lincoln took over the reins there was trouble at Sumter. Major Robert Anderson, its defender, had moved the garrison of nearby Fort Moultrie into Sumter and this irked South Carolina and she yapped a charge of bad faith. Then a merchantman, the *Star of the West*, was ordered to the fort with supplies. But there were troops aboard. The yap became a snarl and South Carolina fired upon the vessel and

forced it to turn back. About this time the Confederacy took over the defenses from her states and inherited the ugly situation at Charleston. General P. G. T. Beauregard, a Louisiana Creole, was put in command at Charleston.

This was the situation when Lincoln was inaugurated. He had twiddled his thumbs and had said or done nothing to head off secession. He and other Republican leaders completely underestimated the South's intent and failed utterly to recognize the portents that were flaming under their noses. They seemed to think that the South was bluffing and that the whole thing would blow over.

Other Northerners were all for letting the sisters go in peace and good riddance to a headache. There certainly was no suggestion that Northern patriots should grab their muskets and go chasing off a thousand miles from home to punish or subdue a bunch of troublesome states way down along the Gulf of Mexico.

Longer heads, however, began to see the picture in its true focus. Every Gulf state was in secession and between them and the North were the buffer slave states of Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri and Arkansas. How could the Union attack without crossing these states? And yet, if the Confederacy were left alive it would make the Gulf of Mexico into a Southern millpond.

Cuba and Mexico might be annexed into an agricultural empire that could trade raw products for Europe's finished goods. Abraham Lincoln was thinking of the Union and not doing much about it, but Northern businessmen were shuddering at the thought of Europe's free market goods at their back door, at the specter of losing the Southern market to England.

President Lincoln's first official speech was a dilly, though with more dally than dilly. He came out strong against sin and for peace and restoration of the Union. Slavery would not be disturbed, he said. But federal forts and custom houses must be held. The Northern "intellectuals" scorned him. Wendell Phillips called him "a huckster in politics." Edwin M. Stanton, who was to be his Secretary of War, called him "the baboon in the White House." That proper Bostonian, Charles Francis Adams, was upset because Abe had told him a dirty joke. Charles Sumner was burned up. He had called upon the president to discuss the grave issues and the first thing the president said was, "I'll bet I'm taller than you; let's stand up back to back, and measure."

Gawky Mr. Lincoln scarcely had got his big feet under the White House dining room table before Confederate emissaries arrived in Washington to negotiate a treaty for independence of the Southern states and to arrange payment for federal property already seized—post offices and things like that—and to settle the issue of Fort Sumter.

Naturally, President Lincoln did not receive them. He wasn't going to be caught in a trap like that, for reception of the emissaries would have meant that he recognized the Confederacy. So he played it smart; very, very smart.

His Secretary of State, the cagey William H. Seward, negotiated with the Confederates through go-betweens. There was a lot of gobbledegook and the South was given the impression that Sumter soon would be evacuated because supplies were running out.

The Confederate emissaries were told in effect and in a stage whisper, "Now you boys go on back home and take it easy and everything will be all right. Just don't get hot under the collar."

There are some who think Lincoln was in on this Machiavellian deception. I don't believe it. This was not Lincoln's way. He was a master of double talk and the double take, but never of the double cross. This sleight of hand policy—now you see it, now you don't—was his Cabinet's, many of them appointed to pay political debts. They figured Lincoln was a dolt and that they were going to run things. They learned better.

Lincoln's feet, clumsy at first, were caught in a net of confusion that he had helped cause. If he didn't know that the Confederacy had been promised the evacuation of Sumter, then he was asleep; and Abraham Lincoln didn't sleep on the job. If he did know it, then he held his nose and closed his eyes to a mess of chicanery, and this, I contend, is what he did. Officially, his hands were clean, but don't dig under the fingernails.

The Confederate emissaries were heading home with news that everything was going to be all right, and then—wham! a military expedition got set to reinforce Sumter.

The South screamed that she had been double-crossed. President Davis said: "The crooked paths of diplomacy can scarcely furnish an example so wanting in courtesy, in candor, and in directness—"

Let us bury all the oratory in history and see what really had happened. Lincoln had the South on the short end of the stick, whether by dirty diplomacy or not. What is clean diplomacy when human beings are fixing to claw out one another's eyes? The Southern leaders thought they had pulled a smart one in Washington, but now they knew that they had been kissed and kicked at the same time.

We Occidentals have a way of smiling and shaking our heads at the intricacies of Oriental face-saving and then prac-

ticing the same thing under the guise of prestige and honor. The North and the South had put chips on their shoulders and somebody had to move or yell calf-rope. The South had a tremendous advantage if she would just hold still. The Confederacy was a going concern and reinforcements at Fort Sumter could hurt nothing much except Southern pride and the prestige of some politicians. It was the North that must shoot or give up the gun.

Incredibly enough, the South shot first. She simply couldn't take it. She simply couldn't sit still in that poker game and keep drawing for the winning flush that almost was bound to show up because she was dealing. Oh, no. She had to try to fill an inside straight. Against a man like Lincoln, that wasn't smart.

Down in the capital at Montgomery, President Davis gave up waiting for a miracle that could prevent war and announced that Sumter must be reduced before it could be reinforced. The attack was ordered for 4:30 o'clock on the morning of April 12, 1861. Edmund Ruffin, a civilian, asked the "honor" of firing the first gun. Brother Ruffin was not a hot-headed South Carolina gamecock. He was a grayhaired Virginian who was disgusted with his native state because it was not rattling its sword, and had gone to South Carolina where action was in the making.

Brother Ruffin got his wish. He fired the first shot and if history shows any dumber shot, then I wonder where and when. Besides, his aim was rightly poor.

All day and all night the bombardment continued. Nobody was killed. Early the next morning Louis T. Wigfall, a Texan, tied a white handkerchief on a saber and rowed out to the fort. His oarsmen were slaves. Wigfall persuaded Major Anderson to surrender the fort. Major Anderson agreed and

ordered a salute to his flag as it came down. The salute set off an ammunition dump and two men were killed, and these were the only deaths in Sumter.

Confederate officers went out to the fort to accept the surrender and one of these saw a bottle on Major Anderson's desk. The Southerner thought it was whiskey and reached for a swig. It was medicine and contained a trace of poison. This was the first Confederate casualty. A big bellyache. They pumped out his stomach and Major Anderson and his Yankee officers went over to the mainland and had a drink with the Confederate officers.

The fuse had been lighted in a dozen different places, but the keg of dynamite blew up at Sumter. This was Pearl Harbor, the Battleship *Maine* and that crazy shot at Sarajevo. Maybe the North didn't understand slavery or secession or

corn pone, pot likker or syllabub. They didn't know Scarlett O'Hara and really didn't know Uncle Tom. But now the flag had been fired upon and this was a thing they understood.

Being a people without monarchy and other symbols of sovereignty and pride, we Americans always have worshiped our flag more than any other nation. It is our symbol; a piece of cloth that says nothing but that means everything. This is an interesting manifestation of patriotism, chauvinism or whatever you care to call it. And this flag had been fired upon. The North merged into a unit and Mr. Lincoln had a war on his hands and moved fast, now that the air was cleared and he knew where he stood.

Congress was not in session and he did not call it into session because he didn't trust Congress and had no time for debate and political shenanigans not of his own making. As commander-in-chief of the United States Army, he declared the Confederacy in rebellion. The secessionists were enraged at first and then were amused. Rebels? It never had occurred to them. Rebels were hanged.

A rebellion is illegal unless it becomes a successful revolution. Rebels, in the broad sense, want change. The South wanted to keep the good old days. It was the North that wanted change.

Lincoln, however, adroitly put the brand of rebellion on the South and it stuck because the United States had better propaganda weapons than the Confederacy and because the winners write the records.

Next President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the "rebellion." It is the duty of Congress to declare war, but Lincoln kept Congress at home and took the step on his own hook. The onus of the first shot was on the South. So was the stigma of rebellion. Mr. Lincoln was playing his

red chips and was filling the flush that the Confederacy had refused. Mr. Lincoln also was swinging toward dictatorship.

Then the South moved. Virginia spoke out that she would furnish no troops to the United States and, furthermore, no invading Yankees were going to cross her hills to get to her sisters. The North's eyes popped open and her jaw sagged. Virginia was something the North understood.

That apple farmer in upstate New York didn't give a continental hooray about Mississippi way down yonder in the swamp and wilderness, and less than that about Texas. But Virginia was the republic's foundation stone, and I wish that television folks who sell soap, light bulbs and deodorants and who write our history in gooey songs and leggy dances would learn that Jamestown, Virginia was our first permanent English colony and not Plymouth, Massachusetts.

When Virginia pulled out, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas quickly followed suit. They were not following Virginia. They just didn't aim to have any part of Mr. Lincoln's army. So they said they wanted out and then took out and told Mr. Lincoln to fish or cut bait.

He fished. Delaware was safe. She was Yankee. Politically and militarily, Lincoln moved fast enough to save Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri for the Union, although they were split wide open. But, for that matter, so was much of the South; Virginia so badly that West Virginia seceded from her mother state and joined the Union. That little secession was all right. It was tweedledee. The other was tweedledum.

There was as much gun-shooting Union sentiment in the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina as in Boston, and enough Union sentiment in Arkansas, for example, for that state to furnish 8,289 white soldiers to the United States.

The Confederate capital was moved to Richmond, Virginia. The stage was set, so let's look at the props.

The population of the loyal states was 21,955,513, including 429,501 slaves. The population of the seceding states was 8,907,678, including 3,521,111 slaves and 260,000 free Negroes. For a while, the slaves were assets. They helped keep things going while the white men fought, but eventually they became liabilities, for as the invasion progressed thousands of them were confiscated by the invaders as contraband and had to be fed, thousands more were taken into the Union army and goodness knows how many of them marauded the countryside after the plantations were burned and discipline broke down.

Nevertheless, the slaves helped the Confederacy at first and fed the families that kept them in bondage. There have been efforts to glamorize and romanticize Southern slave revolts. Bunk. There were a few scattered uprisings, but they never got anywhere. This was due in part to an absence of leadership and organization, but it also was due to the slaves' lack of militant will for freedom as the white man understands freedom. Many of the slaves were descendants of people who had been slaves in Africa and bondage, bitter as it was, was a form of security. The average slave surely had a vague yearning for freedom, but not enough yearning to grab a stick and start slugging.

The specter of widespread slave revolts was a constant threat to the South, but was never a serious realization. If the slaves had reached for rocks or hickory cudgels they could have crushed the Confederacy to a pulp. But they didn't do it. They were pretty docile and stuck around and did as they were told, and if anyone wants to make racism out of this, then go ahead. Really, it had nothing to do with race; all to

do with standards and outlooks. The freedom sauce for the goose is not necessarily freedom sauce for the gander. The American Indian withered and died under slavery. The white man fought with his claws for the kind of freedom that he wanted. The Negro slave in the United States raised his little finger for the thing that the white man called freedom, but he never clenched his fist or raised his arm to fight his way out of his shackles. (Maybe he was smart. He let the white folks cut their own throats so he could be free.)

The United States mustered in about 1,550,000 soldiers, including many new immigrants; some who came over for homes and farms and others to make a fast buck through the liberal bounties for enlistment, who hired their trigger fingers to the Union. Mercenaries are mercenaries in any war.

The Confederacy, with a white population of 5,100,000, mustered in about 800,000 men. She had few new immigrants in her armies. It wasn't that she didn't want them or that she was too noble to offer money (Confederate money) for enlistments. Oh, no. It was just that she had no way to get them in and no inducements to offer except an intangible thing called honor and a very tangible thing called death.

However, more than one hundred of her important officers were foreigners; knights-errant who chose the Southern armies because of their hell-for-leather fighters and not because they gave a whoop about secession, slavery or the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Perhaps the most interesting of these was Heros von Borcke, the giant Pomeranian who loved love, laughter and fighting and who drove Yankees crazy and Southern belles crazier. Then there was the elegant Prince de Polignac. It was this Frenchman who strutted before his command of barefooted,

tobacco-squirting Confeds and placed his hand over his heart and exclaimed: "Soldiers, behold your Polignac!"

They busted out laughing, but they loved it.

And don't forget Lieutenant Jules l'Etondal, the fat fellow who kept an umbrella over him while under fire. It was the sun he hated, not the rain. And Captain Isodore Guillet who was mortally wounded on the same horse on which his three brothers had been killed. And Major Proskauer who never got enough fried mushrooms. And, of course, Irishman Dick Dowling, the Texas bartender whose company of 42 men stalled 16,000 Federals and took 400 prisoners at Sabine Pass.

The North also had a raft of foreign officers who had to quit their profession of soldiering in Europe because money over there was getting tight. The Union offered them jobs and they went to work. Most of these hired out to the North because it was nearer and not dearer, and because the North could meet its payroll.

As a lot, they were not too interesting. An exception was the Comte de Paris who joined the Federals in 1861 and who wrote a history of the Civil War. John Peter Altgeld of Illinois and Carl Schurz of Missouri, both German born and both Union soldiers, rank near the top of great Americans, but they were not professional soldiers.

The story that Garibaldi was offered command of the Union forces is misleading. Italy's splendid freedom man and fighting man was offered a commission as major general. He didn't take it.

Most of the North's political and military leadership came from the Ohio and upper Mississippi river valleys and spoke the same language. The Union was saved by the cornfield boys of the midwest and not by the cotton mill hands of New England.

The South's civil leadership was from the Gulf states and her military leadership was from the Atlantic seaboard. They did not think alike. The Gulf Southerner lived in a conservative, new rich culture of Southern nationalism and, when he read at all, he read Sir Walter Scott. The literate seaboard Southerner looked to his state and read Edgar Allan Poe and genealogies.

Mr. Lincoln had his own kind around him, soldiers and statesmen.

Mr. Davis had Virginia soldiers to run his armies and a conglomeration of statesmen to run his government. Judah P. Benjamin, successively attorney general, secretary of war and secretary of state, was a Jew born in the West Indies. He has been called "the brains of the Confederacy" and he died a Roman Catholic and a famous barrister in England. He shares with Disraeli the same anecdote, the following reply to antisemites: "It is true that I am a Jew, and when my ancestors were receiving their ten commandments from the immediate hand of Deity, amidst the thunderings and lightnings of Mt. Sinai, the ancestors of the distinguished gentlemen who are opposed to me were herding swine in the forests of Scandinavia."

Davis' Secretary of the Treasury was Christopher Memminger of South Carolina, who was born in Germany, and the Secretary of the Navy was Stephen Russell Mallory of Florida, but born in Trinidad, the son of a Connecticut Yankee.

Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, incubators for statesmen since the Revolution, had no top-drawer statesmen in the Confederate government.

It so happens that the Confederate States of America was the product of the same kind of frontier that produced Abraham Lincoln.

Some jingoists have argued that the South fought so well because she was homogeneous and full of good old "American" stock. Rubbish. How could any section be homogeneous while two-thirds Caucasian and one-third Negroid. Actually, the Confederacy was loaded with foreigners.

Of Richmond's 37,910 inhabitants, 4,936 were foreigners, representing more than 13 per cent of the whole population, or about 23 per cent of the white population. More than 20 per cent of Savannah's population was foreign born, including some 3,000 Irishmen. Memphis had more than 4,000 Irishmen and almost 2,000 Germans and her foreign population was more than 30 per cent. The Southern melting pot really was boiling at the time of the Civil War. It cooled off after the war.

The surprise of the Civil War is not that the South was defeated, but that she fought so long against such odds. She couldn't even support herself in peace and had to buy everything from locofocos to locomotives. An agricultural dominion, she was like a colony in 1860 and had to import almost everything down to her shoelaces.

As for waging war against the United States—why it was like hitching a cottonfield mule to the one-hoss shay and trying to race Dan Patch. Even while the Confederacy was winning her battles she was using thorns for pins, pokeberry juice for ink, scraping smokehouse floors for salt and saving urine for gunpowder.

In the field of finance, the Confederate government was as naïve as a Southern backwoods preacher at Monte Carlo's roulette tables. French bankers pulled the simplest of shell games and fleeced the South of millions at the time when the South had to have money to buy the things she couldn't make.

And England was no real help either despite all the hip-hip-hooray. The Confederacy assumed England would fight the

Union blockade to get cotton for her mills. It was a ridiculous assumption, wholly provincial in concept. Many British mills were idle due to overproduction and their warehouses were full of raw cotton. In the beginning, instead of begging for Southern cotton, England soon was shipping cotton to the North.

It was good business. England had raw cotton in her warehouses and finished goods on her docks. So she simply closed down her mills, laid off the workers and saved wages, shipped raw cotton to the North at a big profit and upped the price of cotton goods to her markets. Pretty slick. The only ones who suffered were British cotton mill workers and the South.

British nabobs sympathized with the South and dropped a few tokens into the kitty, but the British workingman hated slavery and there were more laborers than lords. A cotton pinch began to hurt England toward the middle of the war and the mill owners tried to get production back to a profitable peak. By this time, however, British labor had developed a sympathy, almost an affinity, for Southern slaves who also were laborers. So the British workers, to help the Southern slave workers, tightened their belts another notch and stayed away from the mills.

British industrialists fumed and the Confederacy writhed in her death throes. But there it was—European cheerleaders standing on the sidelines and whooping it up for little David while doing business with Goliath, and when it came to blood and death the South was alone.

The Confederacy had to have money. The only way she could get money was by selling cotton. Southern apologists have alibied the defeat in a dozen ways and one of the favorite alibis is the Union blockade—"tight as a drum." It was those old devil Yankees who kept the South from shipping cotton

out and bringing guns back. Stuff and nonsense. During the high tide of the Confederacy when she might have won, the Union blockade was a dismal failure. The South cut her own throat.

President Lincoln declared the blockade in 1861. A blockade is only as effective as the ships that enforce it. The Confederacy's coastline was about 3,500 miles and, on the day Lincoln declared the blockade, his navy had exactly three available ships to enforce it, one ship for one thousand miles. Almost a year later he had only 120 ships, including armed ferryboats.

It was the most monumental bluff in the history of naval warfare, and hear this: the Confederate government knew it was a bluff and pretended to fall for it. A blockade was precisely what the Confederacy thought she needed. Cockeyed? Sure. Unless you untangle the puzzle.

More than anything else the Confederacy wanted recognition from England. If she got this, she could borrow money. She figured the one thing England had to have was cotton because 5,000,000 Britons—one fifth of the population—lived off the textile business in one form or another.

The idea was to create a cotton famine and then England would be forced to open her trade doors and bank doors to the Confederacy. That's where the blockade came in. The South said to England, "The blockade keeps us from sending cotton. You recognize us and help us break the blockade and you'll get cotton."

But England was not that dumb. She pointed out that the blockade was a lot of rubbish, that it was as full of holes as a sieve. "So cash and credit for cotton," England said. "We'll even send ships for it. Blockade, bah!"

The Confederacy said, "Recognize us and between us we

can break the blockade and you'll get cotton. You need the cotton more than we need the credit."

Who was kidding whom? England just turned her head.

And again the South blew her top as she had at Fort Sumter. No recognition, no cotton! That was the cry. A cotton famine abroad would force Europe to accept the Confederacy as a nation. That was the reasoning and forthwith—and hear this: the Confederate government declared an *embargo* on cotton! The one thing in the world they had to sell, and they embargoed it. They were back to Thomas Jefferson's policy of peaceable coercion that preceded the War of 1812. It didn't work with Thomas Jefferson. It didn't work with Jefferson Davis. It has never worked, and it looks like it never will. You just can't coerce folks and nations into shaking hands.

The planters began storing cotton at home and vigilantes stood guard in the ports to see that no cotton was shipped. British ships, Bronx-cheering the federal blockade, sailed empty from Southern ports. This was the beginning of the romantic blockade-runner. The Southern blockade-runners —remember Rhett Butler—did business in defiance of the Confederate government. They were thumbing their noses at Jeffy Davis, not at Father Abraham.

The British supply of cotton began to diminish by the winter of 1861 and the South really put on the pressure. The folks were told to plant no cotton in 1862. Shades of Henry Wallace. They were told to burn the existing supply of cotton. Double shades of the little pigs that got plowed under.

And the Southern farmers obeyed the edicts. Cotton production dropped from around 5,000,000 bales to around 500,000.

England offered anything for cotton except recognition and the South burned her cotton.

It was a fantastic blunder. By the spring of 1862, less than a year after secession, the Confederacy was broke and bankrupt. By then the blockade was becoming effective. It is estimated that in 1861 the South easily could have sold two or three million bales of cotton in Europe. She would have had good credits in Europe's banks. Then maybe recognition would have come. Diplomatic recognitions have a way of following good bank accounts. Cotton and then recognition. That was the smart way. But the Confederacy put the cart before the horse. Recognition and then cotton. Surely no diplomats ever fell so flat on their faces.

The South's luck began running out in 1863 and it was apparent to all that no major power was going to recognize the Confederacy unless she first won her independence. So the Confederacy did a strange thing, a rather sad thing. Since she couldn't get recognition from a temporal power she turned to a spiritual power and tried to get recognition from the Vatican, and to make that church government an ally.

Diplomat Dudley Mann showed up in Vatican City with a letter to the pope from Jefferson Davis. The pope, he was Pius IX, was shocked by the bloodletting in America and said he would pray for peace. Then the Confederate statesman presented the letter from Jefferson Davis and the pope said: "The letter is in English, and English is a language that I do not understand."

So the letter was translated, but the edge was off. The pope listened to the Confederacy's plea and there was a long silence and then the pope spoke: "Is President Davis a Catholic?"

"No."

"Are you a Catholic, Mr. Mann?"

"No."

Apparently it never had occurred to the Confederacy to address the head of the Vatican state in his own language or to send a Catholic representative, although there were many Catholics in the South, including Secretary of the Navy Mallory.

The pope shook hands with the envoy and promised to write Mr. Davis and he did. It was a nice pretty letter. It designated Mr. Davis as "President of the Confederate States of America." That was left-handed recognition. But it called the struggle a "civil war" and that irritated Southerners. The letter from Pius IX was a good museum piece and nothing else.

Cotton and embargoes, bonfires and vigilantes, the pope and platitudes—the Confederacy was as bewildered in finance and diplomacy as Alice was in her Wonderland.

Then how did the Confederacy last so long? One reason was that every time the South did something foolish the North did something even more foolish. But the real reason was that the South knew what she wanted from the very beginning and meant business while the North couldn't quite make up her mind.

The Confederacy had interior lines for military communications and the North had to conquer an area almost as large as Europe. The South was fighting on her own doorsteps and was killing-mad. Also, the Confederacy started off with vastly superior military leadership while the North had to develop hers.

Abraham Lincoln was the Atlas who held his country on his stooped shoulders until she found herself and got rolling. In the beginning, he was surrounded by political leeches and military dolts.

He didn't understand the intricacies of drawing-room diplomacy or the constitutional and economic problems of his country. At first he didn't even understand the predatory interests that tried to use him. But he caught on fast and started slugging.

He suspended the writ of habeas corpus, a right vested in Congress, and started throwing men in jail even on suspicion of disloyalty. Army officers, many of them stuffy and stupid, became the police, the judge and the jury and threw folks in jail without bond or trial. Legal? Of course not, but it was like a man on the end of a rope yelling, "You can't hang me. Ain't legal."

Lincoln saw pretty quickly a thing that should frighten all of us and make us think long and hard: that in time of fast-breaking emergencies, congressional authority often moves too slowly. Lincoln couldn't count on Congress. The house was burning down, and Lincoln had to stomp out the fire.

The machinery of constitutional government broke down during the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln was forced into the role of military dictator.

He assumed dictatorial prerogatives under contention that the South was in rebellion and that, as commander-in-chief of the Union armies, he was the boss and Congress was a debating club. Pretty soon he was handling the ball like a four-armed quarterback in a split-T formation. He never let his right hand know exactly what his left hand was doing and carried his foreign policy in his hip pocket.

He clamped a "legal" blockade on the Confederacy, thus tacitly recognizing the *de facto* government of his enemies. (The Confederacy, as a government, got more "recognition" from the United States than from any other power.)

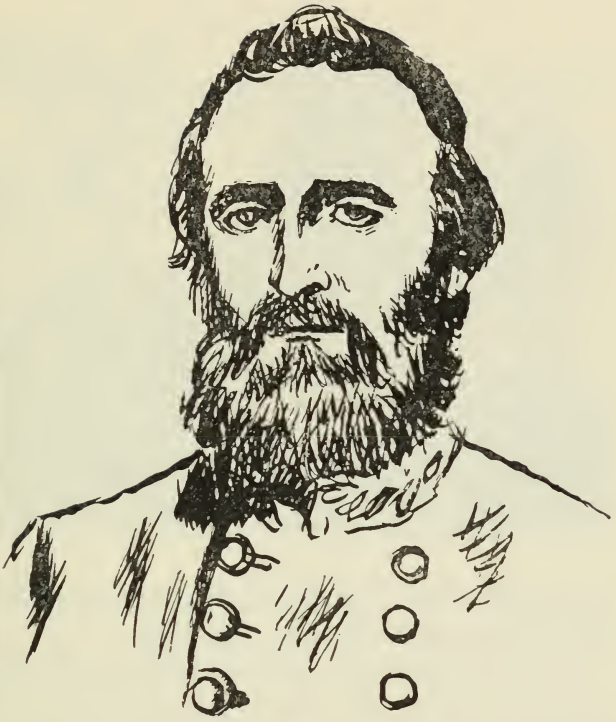
He granted his enemy certain belligerent rights, including

sanctuary for prisoners instead of death. Once the North reached for a rope to hang some "rebel" prisoners, but the South reached for two ropes, and nothing happened.

All of this simply meant that, by Northern reasoning, Johnny Reb was a "lawful" outlaw. So what? Just words for historians and lawyers to quibble over. Mr. Lincoln made up his rules as he went along. Mr. Davis tried to play a new game under the old rules.

It didn't work. It still won't.

4



Bull Run is a creek in Virginia, northeast of Manassas Junction where an east-west and a north-south railroad came together. Federal strategy was to cut this railroad, separate western Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley from eastern Virginia and Tidewater, then march on down to Richmond.

The loudest and most powerful military voices in the North were the editors who were screaming "On to Richmond" and then publishing facts, figures and plans of the Union army. Apparently they thought the Confederates couldn't read, for all the South had to do was to watch the papers and know everything that was going on. The editors just r'ared back in the omnipotence of Jove and pontificated up a storm. Lincoln was throwing some folks in jail for daring to think out loud, but he let the editors get by with everything but murder and,

even at that, many a Yankee boy got his head shot off because the newspapers tried to run the war.

"On to Richmond" was a silly military strategy, but it made a snappy slogan and a good headline. In our Revolutionary War, our capitals fell and it didn't cut much mustard. Even the city of Washington fell in the War of 1812. But by some crackpot reasoning the Northern policymakers figured that if the Confederacy's makeshift capital of Richmond was taken then the war would be over.

The Union had been successful in skirmishes along the Ohio River and over in West Virginia and so, in July 1861, a Northern army came boiling down from Washington as though on a lark, and rolled into Virginia.

Congressmen and their ladies followed in buggies to see the fun. There were flowers and songs and champagne. The politicians made stirring speeches to the musket boys and the musket boys cheered the platitudes and reckoned they'd be home in a few weeks.

The Confederates hit them at Bull Run, and things got so fouled up that the Union army threw down its guns and melted away in panic. Such a disgraceful rout was not to happen again in American history until about two years later when a Confederate outfit did the same thing on a smaller scale at a battle for a bridge over the Big Black River in Mississippi.

The Battle of First Manassas or Bull Run (the name depends on your upbringing) was a melee between two armed mobs. The South won not because her army was good but because the North's army was worse than terrible.

Two names jump out of this battle like flaming stars from a rocket. The first was Thomas Jonathan Jackson, he of the heavy brown beard and sloppy dress, whose eyes shone with the light of religious zealotry. He was born in what is now West Virginia and had been teaching down at Virginia Military Institute and wasn't much of a teacher. He had a brigade at First Manassas and when General Barnard Bee yelled at

him that the Yankees were hard pressing the Confederates, Jackson calmly replied: "Then, sir, we will give them the bayonet."

A few minutes later General Bee rode along a line of wavering Confederates and pointed his saber at Jackson and shouted: "Look there at Jackson standing like a stone wall. Rally behind the Virginians!"

Bee named him. Everybody has called him Stonewall ever since. But not the men who fought with him. They called him "Old Jack."

Stonewall Jackson was a military genius, one of the few our country has produced. He, too, has been shrouded by legends. He was a praying, killing man.

Another officer at First Manassas was William Tecumseh Sherman, a shoddy-looking fellow with burning eyes and a granite face. At the height of the fighting a man ran up to him and gave him a pair of field glasses. Sherman demanded: "Who are you?"

"My name is Lovejoy. A member of Congress."

"What are you doing here? Get out of my lines! Get the hell out of my lines!"

Even then Sherman had more sense than most Northern officers.

He came from Ohio and his friends called him "Cump." He was a West Pointer but had never amounted to much except as superintendent of a Louisiana college that now is Louisiana State University. He tried to run St. Louis' streetcar system and didn't quite make it, and was at a pretty low ebb when the Civil War began.

Sherman and Jackson were mediocrities until the Civil War put them on horses and turned them loose.

Cump looked like a taciturn man, but, actually, he was

something of a blabbermouth. Once he even said, "I am sick of this everlasting subject of slavery. I say 'Damn the niggers!' I wish they were anywhere or could be kept at work."

He said many other silly things, but let's pass them by. Talking generals have a way of making fools of themselves.

As for Sherman, well—here I go: he was far and away the best general in the Union army. But he was not a genius. Jackson's mind turned twice while Sherman's was turning once, but Sherman was a top-flight soldier and more than any other single Yankee general he preserved the Union.

He was a Colonel at Manassas and then was transferred to the West. The newspapers didn't like him because he accused them, and rightly, of printing information that helped the

enemy. A story was started that he was losing his mind. Oh, brother.

The North recoiled in panic and dismay from the First Battle of Manassas and the South herself couldn't quite take it in. She had scored a touchdown the first time she'd got her hands on the ball and then couldn't make up her mind how to convert for the extra point. So the backfield went into a huddle while the line wandered off and picked up Yankee souvenirs and tore down the goal posts. The Secesh, strictly corn-likker boys, found that Yankee champagne that the bigwigs had fetched down to toast the fall of Richmond. The Secesh guzzled champagne and washed it down with Bourbon and branch water, and the branch was Bull Run.

Strategists have debated this hour ever since, some contending that had the Confeds pushed on they could have captured Washington and ended the war. In the next breath they argue that capture of Richmond would not have ended the war. Something doesn't add up.

The chances are the Confederacy could have taken Washington after First Manassas. Mr. Lincoln—and he was the government—simply would have moved to Philadelphia or New York and kept fighting.

Jefferson Davis proclaimed the policy that the Confederacy was waging a defensive war and would not invade. So Johnny Reb sat in the shade alongside Bull Run and waited until his head cleared from his spree and then wrote his little Lindy Lou.

The Yanks were whipped and soon he'd be home to chop out the cotton and maybe get in a little fishing before picking time. He never got home and old Aunt Lou died a spinster, cursing Yankees for her loneliness and pouring her bitterness into the young, eager ears of the second and third generations, including me, whose first memorized poem was:

Under the sod and the dew
Waiting the judgment day:—
Under the one, the Blue;
Under the other, the Gray.

The North was lamenting its disgrace and passing the buck to everybody and everything. President Lincoln sat in his sock feet at a window of the White House and propped a telescope on his big toe and watched for the Confeds to come swarming across the Potomac.

Out west, Missouri was having her own Civil War. In response to Lincoln's call for troops, Governor Claiborne Jackson thundered at the president: "Your requisition is illegal, unconstitutional, revolutionary, inhuman, diabolical, and cannot be complied with." That, my friends, was a politician's way of saying *no*.

The Confederate government appropriated a million dollars to get Missouri out of the Union. General Sterling Price was put in charge of raising fifty thousand Secesh soldiers. Said the General to Missouri: "Do I hear your shouts? Is that your war cry which echoes through the land? Are you coming? Fifty thousand men! Missouri will move to victory with the tread of a giant. Come on, my brave boys, fifty thousand heroic, gallant, unconquerable Southern men! We await your coming."

He might have been waiting yet. He got less than five thousand men and the Yankees pushed him into Arkansas, and Missouri continued her civil war within the Civil War and stayed in the Union. In November, 1861, the Confederacy officially admitted Missouri into their government. But it just didn't take.

Among the Missourians to answer the South's sterling call for heroes was one of my favorite Americans—Mark Twain,

known in those days as Sam Clemens. Many of his biographers have sort of slurred over this period in the life of Mark Twain. They seem not to want to admit that the great man was a Rebel.

At the outbreak of the war, Sam Clemens was a young pilot on the lower Mississippi River and was making mighty good money. His brother, Orion Clemens, was a strong Lincoln man and the federal government gave him a political job way out in the territory of Nevada.

As soon as Brother Orion was out of sight, young Sam up and joined a Secesh outfit. Sort of a ragged militia. Call it a joke if you want to, but Sam Clemens was in the Southern army.

Then things got serious and Sam didn't aim to get shot at or to shoot at anybody. He got mixed up in a comic opera fracas and then pulled out and hightailed it for Nevada to work for Brother Orion and, incidentally, the Yankees. That's the way Sam Clemens got to the golden West that made him immortal. That's the way one Johnny Reb became Mark Twain—thank the Lord. Years later, instead of trying to explain it all, he just wrote a funny piece about it and called it *The Campaign that Failed.*

However, if you want to split hairs, he was a "scalawag"—a scalawag being a Southerner who helped the Union cause.

Things were as hot in Kentucky as they were in Missouri. Here, too, the Confederacy appropriated a million dollars to pull Kentucky into the new republic and officially admitted her in December, 1861. But this one didn't take either. Kentucky, like Missouri, had her civil war within the Civil War.

Meanwhile, the North had recovered somewhat from the shock of First Manassas and then began galloping off in all directions. The military was riddled with politics, deadwood and stupidity. President Lincoln instructed General George

B. McClellan to organize an army and take Richmond. Little Mac was a good organizer and made a good speech. And if his ego could have been changed into powder it would have blown Dixie plum' the other side of Pago Pago.

Little Mac got 115,000 men together and moved them by boat to the peninsula of Virginia, down where the nation got started at Jamestown and where Pocahontas had thrown her arms around Captain John Smith. It was the spring of 1862 and somebody had forgot to tell Little Mac that it rains in Virginia in the spring and that Southern mud is glue. His army floundered and between him and Richmond were 95,000 Confederates under Gen. Joe Johnston. So he inched along in the mire. Little Mac was a cautious man.

Let's leave him stuck in the mud and take a look at the whole picture and see in a few paragraphs what it took Washington a long, long time to see. The Confederacy was a scorpion with a hundred legs and steel jaws. A freak? So was the Confederacy.

The head was in Virginia and the body curved south and west along the railroads and rivers. Its stinger poked into the Mississippi River and fed the body from that end.

A few long thinkers insisted right off that the only way to kill the scorpion was to paralyze it by nipping its legs and then working it over from its stinger to its head. In other words, begin at the tail and take the rivers and railroads. These thinkers included Miss Anna Carroll, a Maryland pamphleteer, a propagandist and amateur strategist. She, through instinct, intuition or whatever women have, knew more about broad military strategy in the early days than most of the Union general staff, but her advice was lost in the hip-hip-hooray of Washington's bedlam. Somewhere there should be a monument to Anna Carroll. She pleaded with the

Union to look to the West for salvation and she was right, for the Civil War was won in the West, as the East called the Mississippi and Ohio valleys in those days.

Out there was Captain Ulysses Simpson Grant who had got nowhere in the army or out of it. His real name was Hiram Ulysses. The Simpson came from Grandma Simpson in a name mixup.

The world had given U. S. Grant a hard time, partly due to tough luck and partly to liquor, but mostly because he was a long ways this side of brilliant. In fact and in many things, he was just sort of dumb. At Georgetown, Ohio, where he was reared, the village wits called him Useless Grant; this slow, slovenly fellow who was always borrowing money and forgetting to repay it and who stood in awe of the rich.

He was made a colonel at the outbreak of the Civil War

because, a West Point man and a Mexican War veteran, he knew the manual of arms. Besides, the regiment liked him and had refused to serve under his predecessor.

Pretty soon he was fighting and the Union had to make him a general because he knew how to fight; a slow, clumsy bear to be sure, but a fighter nevertheless. His uniform never fit and he loved horses and sometimes smoked cigars when his nerves were jangling from a hangover.

Biographers have had to dig deep for exciting anecdotes about U. S. Grant. He simply was not an exciting man. The story that Lincoln wanted Grant's brand of whiskey to give to his other generals is not true. This hokum was made out of the whole cloth by a correspondent for the New York *Herald* in 1863. (In denying the story, Lincoln pointed out that it was more than a hundred years old anyhow, and Lincoln liked original stories. The Grant-whiskey-other-generals story goes back at least as far as George I of England and his General Wolfe.)

The truth about Grant makes him look pretty sad on many occasions. It was he who issued the infamous General Order No. 11, which attempted to expel all Jews from his military district under the ridiculous assumption that Jews alone were responsible for illicit cotton trading with the enemy. Actually these lawbreakers mostly were Yankee Protestants, including some of Grant's own family. The order which hounded him all of his life read:

"The Jews as a class violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department, and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department within 24 hours from the receipt of this order.

"Post commanders will see to it that all of this class of people be furnished passes and required to leave, and any one

returning after such notification will be arrested and held in confinement until an opportunity occurs of sending them out as prisoners unless furnished with permit from headquarters.

"No passes will be given these people to visit headquarters for the purpose of making personal application for trade permits."

The War Department immediately went over Grant's head and revoked the order, but it is the basis for the insistent charge that Grant was anti-Semitic. That I doubt. He, with his narrow-gauge, single-track mind, probably never thought about it one way or another. He was not anti-Semitic or anti-anything much. He was just pro-Grant, a second-rate fellow trying to get along.

Grant and Sherman got together in Tennessee; the bulldozer and the roadscraper.

Back in Virginia, General McClellan, dripping mud and spouting oratory, made a lunge at Richmond and the Confeds whiplashed him. This was the long dreary Peninsular Campaign in which the North made so many errors.

Confederate General Joe Johnston was wounded and President Davis turned the Army of Northern Virginia over to his personal military adviser. That would be General Robert Edward Lee, called R. E. Lee during the war or Marse Robert, but seldom Robert E. Lee.

I would be presumptuous indeed to attempt to add anything to the record of the greatest general our country has produced. He is enshrined in cold, spotless marble at Washington & Lee University in Virginia.

Nevertheless, I have a confession to make: I happen to be one Southerner who has a mental block on General Lee. All during my childhood I heard over and over—"Robert E. Lee was a Southern gentleman and a great Christian."

I didn't want to be a Southern gentleman. I wanted to be a railroad engineer. I wasn't interested in immaculate gray uniforms, in cold marble and perfection and I was afraid of R. E. Lee. He had been dead for years and yet his spirit seemed so close to us that I was afraid. He was always watching me and when I did bad things, like write dirty words on a fence or chunk at birds, he shook his head and disapproved. God, my grandmother and Robert E. Lee were always watching me. He was the archangel Michael, away off yonder beyond my reach—pure white, godly and cold. I have never got over it. Forgive me, all of you who disagree, but I don't idolize Robert E. Lee. Who wants a general for a guardian angel?

So here I go again sticking my neck out. Lee was not my favorite Confederate general. Gimme Old Jack Jackson or Nathan 'ygod Bedford Forrest, helling for leather. Or Stand Watie, the Cherokee. Who can help loving a man with a name like that—General Stand Watie.

But, anyway, R. E. Lee and Old Jack Jackson got together in Virginia.

Lee began to put the pressure on McClellan down in the peninsula while over in the Shenandoah Valley Jackson blew the lid off. More than 40,000 Federals were poured into the Shenandoah Valley to threaten Richmond from the west and Old Jack was ordered to hold them off. He wasn't a holding man. He had only 17,000 soldiers, but he elected to dust out the Yankees and that's exactly what he did; outthinking and outfighting everything that the Union threw at him. One of his men explained it best: "All Old Jack gave us was a musket, a hundred rounds, and a gum blanket. Then he druv us like hell."

Jackson pinned their ears back in the Shenandoah and Lee

thrashed the Union army, the Army of the Potomac, at the side door to Richmond. McClellan was relieved of command or just plain fired if you want to be frank about it. He gave us a good army saddle—the famous McClellan saddle—and therefore he deserves the gratitude of callused hoss soldiers.

General H. W. Halleck was made general-in-chief of all the Union armies. Halleck was a nincompoop.

General John Pope was put in command of the Army of the Potomac. He was all brass and bombast and even more cautious than McClellan. Wisely the Union abandoned the Peninsular Campaign and unwisely General Pope moved back around to Manassas and Bull Run and bragged what he was going to do to the Rebels.

Lee set him up like tenpins and Jackson force-marched an entire corps squarely behind the Army of the Potomac without Pope's knowledge and the Confederates squeezed him in the wringer and left him limp.

Pope whined to Lincoln that his army was melting away and that something must be done. Only the good Lord knows what General Pope expected Lincoln to do. Maybe grab a stick and run down there and do all of his own fighting.

There was only one thing for Lincoln to do and he did it. He put McClellan back in command, and prayed.

The South moved into Maryland. By the strange logic of war, Lee's advance into that state was never called an "invasion" by the Confederacy. The South figured that Maryland was a Southern state and that she really was marching into her own, to pull Maryland into the Confederacy by driving the Yankees out. This was to be the liberation of Maryland and this is where Barbara Frietchie came in, at Frederick.

Dame Frietchie to Stonewall Jackson:

> *"Shoot, if you must, this old grey head,*
> *But spare your country's flag," she said.*

Jackson to his men:

> *"Who touches a hair on yon grey head*
> *Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.*

Nice and pretty, but it didn't happen.

A glance at the map will show that when the Confederates marched through Frederick they already were *north* of Washington and even of Baltimore.

McClellan met them around Antietam Creek (or Sharpsburg if you're a Southerner) and fought them to a standstill. Here was a new McClellan, maneuvering as if he knew Lee's plans.

He did. He had a copy of Lee's Special Orders No. 191, found at Frederick wrapped around three cigars. Some Confederate commander (D. H. Hill?) lost his copy instead of swallowing it as they do in the movies, and it showed up as a cigar wrapper. Private B. W. Mitchell of the 27th Indiana Volunteers found it and had sense enough to realize it was valuable, thus proving he was wiser than some of the

big brass. Private Mitchell was wounded at Antietam and died about four years later. His destitute widow did not even get a pension through somebody's fault, maybe her own.

Lee loafed back to Virginia. This was the moment to follow the Confederates and at least harass the Army of Northern Virginia if it couldn't be destroyed. But McClellan hibernated. Lincoln tried to nudge him into action, begging and pleading. McClellan just sat; perhaps waiting for three more cigars.

General A. E. Burnside took over the Union army. The press, president and public were screaming for a fight. Well, he'd give them one. He didn't want the job or the responsibility. But he had his orders to fight—so look out boys, here I come.

Recklessly and stupidly he lunged at Fredericksburg, Virginia. Calmly the entrenched Confederates cut him to bloody bits. Twelve thousand Union casualties bore testimony to his failure and he took the rap for this horror although the blame really lay in Washington. They wanted a fight and got a massacre.

General Burnside wept. He gave us a fashion of short side whiskers called sideburns.

Militarily, the Union had failed in Virginia during the year of 1862. The South looked mighty good. But how good was she? She wasn't winning; she just wasn't losing.

Here was a clever welterweight fighting one heavyweight after another, and every time one heavyweight got knocked down another climbed through the ropes. It was like Sugar Ray Robinson taking on John L. Sullivan, Jim Jeffries and Jack Johnson—one at a time and whipping 'em. But with Jack Dempsey and Joe Louis just waiting to get to him.

It couldn't go on forever.

5

The Confederacy's backbone was broken in the Mississippi valley before she had a chance to breathe, much less to stretch.

About the time of the Union's first disasters over in Virginia, Federal armies already were wandering piecemeal around Kentucky and stamping out the fires of secession and down from Cairo, Illinois, on the Ohio river, came Brig. Gen. Ulysses Grant with a bobtail army.

Grant was a man with a plan, but nobody would listen to his plan. He knew that the Confederacy must be defeated in a war of movement, that the Southern armies must be met and beaten. First control the railroads and rivers and then corner the Confederate armies and crush them. It didn't take any great military wisdom to see this, just common sense.

Some Eastern newspapers misspelled Donelson, a fort in West Tennessee near the Kentucky line. They spelled it "Donaldson." All it did was control the Cumberland River to Nashville, and Nashville was the heart of Tennessee and Tennessee was the heart of the Confederacy—Tennessee the heart, the Mississippi River the spine, Georgia the belly and Virginia the head.

General Grant plodded down into Tennessee, not too far from his base at Cairo, Illinois. He had gunboats and he fought like an elephant instead of a fox. A makeshift Confederate army dug in at Donelson and Grant laid siege to the fort.

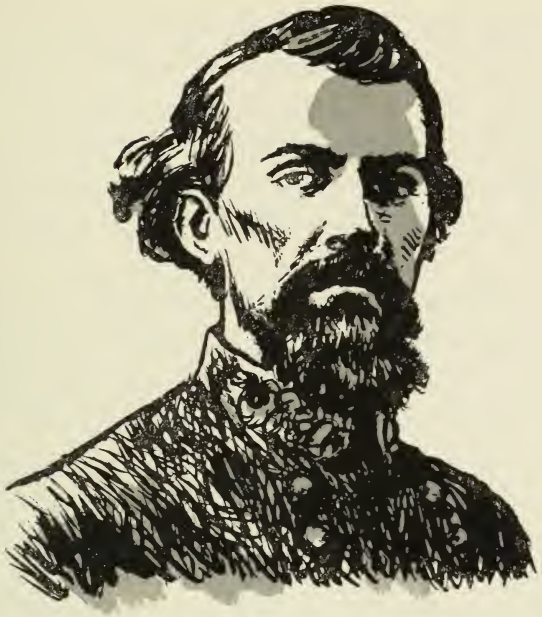
It didn't seem too important at the time and was strictly minor league warfare. The Southern commander, General Albert Sidney Johnston, was over around Nashville to protect that capital from another Union army—this one under Don Carlos Buell—and too late did he realize that Donelson was the key to Tennessee's vault.

Inside Fort Donelson was an interesting collection of Southerners. The commander was General John B. Floyd, who had been Secretary of War in President Buchanan's cabinet. He also had been indicted for embezzlement of public funds, a crime committed by a subordinate.

Next to Floyd was General Gideon J. Pillow, a big-talking fellow who never quite knew the score. The third in command was General Simon Bolivar Buckner.

Kentuckian Buckner was destined to become the first Southern scapegoat although really he was quite a man. He had been in West Point with Grant and even had paid certain embarrassing little bills for Grant.

Also in the fort was a giant of a fellow named Nathan Bedford Forrest around whose neck hang a hundred myths. First off, he was not illiterate as has been charged. He was by



no means an educated man and was a lord-awful speller, but one of our history's best soldiers; a soldier's soldier, a natural.

Forrest was a shrewd man with a dollar and a heller with his fists. He made money trading slaves, cattle and horses and then gave up slave trading which was never respectable and often not profitable. He got into real estate and cotton planting and got rich.

He never said, "Git thar fust," or whatever the saying is. He did say that one man on the budge, meaning move, was worth two standing still. He also said that war meant fighting and that fighting meant killing. He knew no rules of war except to win. History calls him a cavalry leader. Actually he commanded mounted infantry and was the best *natural* general of the Civil War. His prowess, courage and strength were phenomenal. Once he stopped an armed mob with only

a knife. He was wounded several times and goodness knows how many horses were shot from under him, maybe 29.

Toward the end of the war when he captured Fort Pillow and its Negro garrison, he gave the Union one of its best propaganda gimmicks in the "Massacre of Fort Pillow." But there are two sides to that story if anyone cares to read the records.

Forrest enlisted in the Confederate army as a private and then put up his own money to raise and equip a battalion. He, too, was at Fort Donelson, listening to the West Pointers harangue and wondering just what the devil they were talking about.

Grant put the heat on Donelson and Generals Floyd and Pillow loaded some of their men aboard steamers and slipped out, leaving General Buckner to hold the bag. General Buckner asked his old friend Grant for terms and old-friend Grant replied: "No terms except an unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works."

Forrest swore the Confederate equivalent of "nuts" and got his cavalry out. About 15,000 Secesh were surrendered, however, and the North's mouth popped open. It wasn't much of a meat course, but it was a mighty tasty entree to the hungry Union.

The newspapers didn't know much about Grant and pulled their stories out of thin air. Somebody said he was smoking a cigar when he received the surrender. If he was, the chances are that Buckner gave it to him. Anyway, the folks almost swamped him with cigars. Grant was never a man to scorn a luxury or refuse a gift and tried to smoke all the cigars. He eased up on his drinking but became an inveterate smoker and

the cigars probably aggravated the throat condition that brought on the cancer that killed him.

General Simon Bolivar Buckner was captured at Donelson and then was exchanged to fight again against the Yankees. It was a funny kind of war. In after years he was editor of the Louisville (Ky.) *Courier*, later to be the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, one of our country's really good newspapers. He was a pallbearer at Grant's funeral and lived to be 91 years old; 1823-1914. His son, also General Simon Bolivar Buckner, was killed in action in World War II.

With Donelson gone, the Confederates figured Nashville was untenable and evacuated it. The Civil War had been going on less than a year and a Union army already was in the heart of the Confederacy.

Grant kept inching south, puffing cigars, drinking occasionally and fighting the gross stupidity of his military superiors. He reached the Tennessee River and here indeed was a lifeline of the South.

The Confederacy had to stop him. General Albert Sidney Johnston consolidated his scattered forces and hit Grant at Shiloh Church, only a few miles from the northern boundary of the state of Mississippi. Sherman was with Grant by then. So was a general named Lew Wallace, who later wrote *Ben Hur*.

Albert Sidney Johnston was killed at Shiloh and Grant himself was beaten and yet Shiloh was a Union victory, and make no mistake about that. But the man who saved the day was General Don Carlos Buell whose name is so unfamiliar to most Americans that they can't even pronounce it.

Buell was not in the class with Yankees Sherman, Grant, Meade or Thomas, but was better than most Federal generals. His army had been sort of meandering around Middle Ten-

nessee and it was pure luck that he reached Shiloh in time to win that battle and for Grant to get the credit. Buell should have had the laurels, but his name wasn't right to make a good old dyed-in-the-wool "American" hero. Sounded too Spanish. It just so happens that Don Carlos Buell was an Ohio Welshman whose wife was from Mobile. He later was hounded out of the army because he did not follow up a victory, a military crime that was quite frequent in the Union army.

Shiloh was fought in April of 1862, only a year after Fort Sumter, and was the greatest battle ever fought on the American continent up to that time. The North lost more than 13,000 men, and the South more than 10,000.

It's hard to believe but after the victory of Shiloh Grant actually was sidetracked and General Halleck took over. He had enough men to march plum' to Mexico and yet he dawdled. He had a report that the Confederates were entrenched at Corinth, Mississippi. The cannon could be seen bristling from earthworks.

For about six weeks Halleck crawled the short distance between Shiloh and Corinth and when he got there he discovered that the Confederate cannon were wooden logs and that the Secesh were long gone. It made Halleck look like the jackass he was.

He occupied Corinth and built his army up to 120,000 men. Grant begged for the army to march it through Mississippi and Alabama to Mobile. He might have done it, but Halleck gave him the brush-off.

The fall of Corinth, itself only a village, gave the Union a stranglehold on the Memphis & Charleston Railroad and this was the most important line of communication between the Confederacy west of the Mississippi river and the Confederacy along the Atlantic seaboard. This road was now in

Federal hands and Arkansas, Texas and much of Louisiana virtually were cut off.

Three weeks after Shiloh, a Union fleet under Admiral David Farragut of Tennessee, captured New Orleans, and this the city whose legal *dix* bills, called *dixies*, had given Dixie its name. The victory was a refreshingly daring exploit that stunned the South. The Confederacy thought its largest city and most important port could be defended by river forts. Farragut simply ran by the forts, thumbed his nose at them and New Orleans fell like a squashy fig in June-bug time. Then Memphis succumbed to a flotilla of river boats and by June of 1862 the Southern scorpion was feeding itself through its stinger that poked into the Mississippi river at Vicksburg, a river and railroad town flanked by hills and bayous.

Back in Virginia, the Confederates were killing bees in swarms, but were making no effort to destroy the hives. In the Mississippi Valley, Yankee bees were swarming and sticking. They took their hives with them.

Down in New Orleans, a gent named Ben Butler took over the Yankee Army of Occupation. Now here was a dilly, this Brother Butler. Democrat, too. But he had shady influence with Republican VIP's. In modern parlance, General Ben Butler must have known where the body was buried. Greedy and crafty, his sticky fingers did all right for his pocketbook, and his brother, working the Louisiana territory, lined his pockets in illegal trade with the Confederates. The methods were simple. The Federals seized Confederate property as contraband and then Ben Butler's brother sold it back to the Secesh at a good profit. Also, he finagled Confederate cotton in New Orleans and sold it in New York. He bought flour in New York at $6 a barrel and sold it in New Orleans at $24 a barrel. General Ben Butler supposedly was not in on his

brother's thievery. Perhaps the general was reading a book. Maybe *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

Butler and Sherman have become sort of cuss words in the South. Sherman deserves better, but Butler—ugh. He got peeved because the women of New Orleans did not treat him

with proper respect. One actually spat in his face. Then one night some of his men were out carousing in the tenderloin and some of the harlots insulted them. All they did was empty their slop jars on the soldiers' heads.

General Butler therewith proclaimed that inasmuch as his men had been subject to "insults from women calling themselves ladies," that "hereafter when any female shall by mere gesture or movement insult, show contempt for any officers or soldiers of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman about town plying her avocation."

That's when they started calling him "Beast" Butler. In justice to this rascal, however, it should be pointed out that he tolerated no rebellious nonsense in New Orleans and that he cleaned up the town by improving the sewage system. Maybe his men did snitch a lot of silver spoons, but not as many as has been charged to him. There just were not that many silver spoons in New Orleans. Incidentally, they also called Brother Butler "Silver Spoon Butler."

All of this was mighty sordid, but some good things were happening at the same time. Up in St. Louis, James B. Eads was instituting assembly line methods for mass production of ships. A week after he contracted to do a job, Eads had 4,000 men working in the Minnesota forests, the rolling mills of Pittsburgh, the cannon foundries of Ohio and the shipyards of St. Louis. Forty-five days later he launched the world's first ironclad. This was the *St. Louis*, later named the *DeKalb*.

About the same time, Richard Gordon Gatling was putting his brilliant mind to work for the Union. Gatling was a North Carolina Tarheel. He invented a screw propeller only to learn that John Ericsson had beat him to the patent. So Gatling sat

down and invented a rice-sowing machine, a wheat drill and a steam plow—the forerunner of our modern tractors.

He went to St. Louis to have them manufactured and was on a business trip to Cincinnati when he contracted smallpox. Gatling could not get what he considered proper medical attention and so, upon recovery, he went to medical college for four years simply to be able to take care of himself and his family. He never practiced on anybody except his own folks, but was one whiz of a doctor.

At the outbreak of the war, he gave his mind to ordnance and invented a rapid-fire machine gun that fired 250 shots a minute. Officially it was the Gatling gun, although his name has been abbreviated to "Gat," meaning any automatic pistol.

Over in Hampton Roads, Virginia, the *Monitor* and *Virginia* (*Merrimac*) had tangled in the first battle of ironclads, although Eads' *DeKalb* was older than either of them. This set-to still is one of the country's most romanticized sea battles. The Peninsular Campaign was in the making. Yankee balloons were in the sky for observation purposes and Yankee ships, all wooden, lay off the coast to support the army.

The Confeds worked over an old hulk that had been the *Merrimac*, plated her with iron, named her the *Virginia* and sent her out to wreck the Union fleet. She almost succeeded, scattering and sinking the Union's wooden ships right and left. Washington trembled and President Lincoln again propped his telescope on his big toe and watched the Potomac, up which some folks expected the clumsy, crazy Confederate ironclad to appear and bombard the capital.

However, just like in the movies, the Federal ironclad *Monitor* showed up in the nick of time. The *Monitor* was commanded by the same John Ericsson who had beaten "Gat" Gatling to the patent for a screw propeller.

The *Monitor* and the *Virginia* shot and strained and grunted in the first battle between ironclads, an indecisive fracas in which neither ship was beaten. Both sides claimed a victory; the South because the *Monitor* would not resume the battle and the North because the Union fleet was saved. The North was right. The *Monitor* accomplished her mission. The *Virginia* did not.

And, now, away we go back to the Mississippi Valley. There was glory and romance in Virginia, but only slow grinding death out there in the West. The Confederacy's legs had been snipped off in Kentucky, Missouri, Arkansas and much of Tennessee and Louisiana. Its stinger must be pulled at Vicksburg where river and railroad brought supplies from as far away as Texas.

Two Union fleets converged upon Vicksburg and an army joined them. And then appeared what I contend was the Confederacy's most remarkable ship—the steam ram *Arkansas*. This homemade monster was built in a swampy wilderness of anything useful that the Confeds could get their hands on; and it came steaming one day out of the Yazoo River and into the Mississippi. It scattered two Union fleets of more than a hundred ships and forced the Union army to retire. Where is a better saga than that? The *Arkansas*' commander was Isaac N. Brown, who also devised the first torpedoes in our naval warfare. Here again is a man history has passed by although he probably was the most able commander in the Confederate navy.

Almost by default, Grant was put back in charge of the Union's western operations and realized that he had to take Vicksburg. He sent Sherman down one way, to be soundly beaten, and then took off himself catty-cornered across Mississippi. He was doing pretty fair until the Confeds cut in

behind him, burned his base at Holly Springs, Mississippi, and captured Mrs. Grant and one of her slaves. This was most embarrassing and the Confederates apologized and bowed and scraped and turned her loose.

The Holly Springs raid was commanded by General Earl Van Dorn and this gentleman is worth a line because so many Southerners apparently think that he gave his life in the line of duty. Pleasure, not duty, cost Van Dorn his life. He was not killed in battle at all, but by a jealous husband who spied his wife and Van Dorn in a buggy. The assassin was a Dr. Peters.

In Virginia, the Confederacy was beating off one attack after another, but in the West she was being beaten. The North could not grasp the significance of her Western victories and Southern newspapers pooh-poohed them. A mere bagatelle, the editors said and the pulpits echoed this foolishness. Why, everybody knew the Yanks couldn't shoot for shucks and that one Southerner could whip ten of 'em any day in the week and twenty on Sunday.

Southern newspapers were being printed on wallpaper and with homemade ink, but were screaming—"They can't beat us." Unfortunately, most Southerners didn't read newspapers. Many of them couldn't read. But they could starve and die. Salt was getting scarce. There was no medicine. News trickled back that Johnny was dead somewhere away off yonder and now Pa would have to double up on the plowing. Maybe the Yanks couldn't shoot for shucks, but something was killing Johnny Reb. Maybe that triumvirate—pneumonia, dysentery and fevers—maybe they had ambushed him. He just wasn't coming back. That was for sure.

The North seemed not to realize that in late '62 she had the South in a corner and was beating out her brains. That's because opinion and propaganda came out of the East, and

Eastern politicians and editors didn't know much about the Mississippi valley and simply couldn't get through their heads that the Mississippi River and not the Potomac River was the backbone of Dixie.

For the purpose of comparison, let's reverse the picture and imagine it this way: the war was less than two years old and Minnesota and Iowa were in Confederate hands, and much of Michigan. Also Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio. That's about the significance of Missouri, Kentucky, Arkansas, and New Orleans, Memphis, the Cumberland River and Nashville. If that had been the case, the North would have been in one whale of a mess.

The South was.

6

The Emancipation Proclamation was declared effective as of January 1, 1863; and here is a declaration that has been talked about more and read less than any other important American document except maybe the Constitution itself.

This proclamation, of and by itself, did not abolish slavery and attempted to free only the slaves in those states at war with the United States. Slavery was acceptable among friends, just bad for enemies.

The proclamation was only as good as the bayonets that enforced it.

It was not a congressional policy, but flatly an executive military decree.

Lincoln himself was skeptical about it and issued it with reluctance. He wanted to pay for freedom with money and

not with blood. The United States, through congressional resolution and at Lincoln's insistence, had offered to buy the freedom of slaves. The seceding states looked over the offer and scorned it. They didn't trust Lincoln. That was a mistake. They had every reason not to trust the Republican party, Congress, big business, and the Abolitionists, but they should have trusted Lincoln.

Only after the South rebuffed his overtures did he issue his proclamation.

Legal? Of course not. It was confiscation of private property without appeal, redress or compensation; without congressional approval or judicial sanction.

So what. Shotgun weddings aren't legal either, but, sure as shooting, they make the young'uns legitimate.

It was this proclamation that made Lincoln "The Great Emancipator," an universal honor that would have surprised him had he lived to hear it. He was more accustomed to being reviled as a rascal, despot, lunatic and baboon—and by his own side.

His masterpiece has been called our finest "human document" (whatever that is) since the Declaration of Independence.

It has been called a bit of masterful military strategy.

It has been called a devious machination to lure slaves into bloody revolt. That's humbug. If there was one mistake that Lincoln opposed, that mistake was a general slave rebellion. You can bet your bottom dollar that if Negro slaves had started killing white women and children in an out-and-out uprising then Yankee soldiers themselves, immediately and without orders, would have jumped in there to help their white kind. A bloody slave revolt would have crushed the Confederacy, but it also might have cracked the Union for-

ever and surely would have turned the Civil War into a massacre. Abraham Lincoln knew this.

As I see it, the Emancipation Proclamation was neither deliberately humanitarian nor military. It wasn't an under-the-table card trick or dirty pool. It was political; the shrewdest political document since King John gave Magna Carta to his nobles and thereby saved his kingdom and maybe his own neck.

At this period of his administration, Lincoln was getting cussed coming and going. His own people were calling him a despot, and with reason. He had assumed dictatorial power and here is the most fascinating paradox of all: Father Abraham became a despot to save democracy from itself and to insure its survival. He was fifty years ahead of his country in civil and human rights, maybe a hundred years. So he grabbed all the reins and handled the horses himself, determined to save the wagon even if a lot of folks got run over.

The Civil War had become as unpopular as our War of 1812 had been and as our Korean War was to be. The Northern people, bleeding, sweating and dying, began asking themselves—why? Unionism was an abstract thing and it was hard to get folks to die for an abstraction.

Of this confusion and disillusionment, the Emancipation Proclamation was born.

"I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, do proclaim . . ."

That all slaves within any seceding state or designated part of any seceding state shall be free "thenceforward and forever."

However, loyal slave states and loyal sections of disloyal states were exempt.

The proclamation was released as a trial balloon and it

soared so high so fast that, for a spell, nobody could see it, and then it exploded into a lightning bolt that set the woods on fire.

"As Christ died to make men holy, let us die to make men free—"

It turned the Civil War into a crusade. Now that Yankee boy knew why he was dying: to make men free.

Lincoln's proclamation, political in concept but noble in result, put the Civil War on the level where it should have been all along: on the slavery issue, on an issue of morals, decency and righteousness.

It was one of the few good clean winds that blew through the slaughterhouse in 1863. But even it could not blow away the stench of death, corruption, greed and graft; for democracy was wallowing in the filth and mire of human depravity.

Money was the root of most of the evils and the evils were more prevalent in the North than in the South for two reasons —more money and more folks. As soon as it became apparent that the North was in for a long hassle, some sharpers smelled the bonanza from afar like feist dogs treeing a polecat, and they waded in. Many of our country's great fortunes had their beginnings in Civil War blood. Contractors, politicians and speculators stole from the government, gypped the soldiers and double-crossed one another.

It cost the United States about three billion dollars in cash to fight the Civil War. Paper money (greenbacks) was made legal tender. There was not enough gold to back up this paper and so a premium was put on gold and the metal became a commodity. The value of a greenback dollar dropped to 35¢. Prices and profits went sky-high and the poor, as usual, were caught in the squeeze.

The first popular bond issues of our history appeared under

the supervision of Jay Cooke and Company of Philadelphia. The Treasury called in this outfit (much as the goverment today sometimes calls in an advertising firm) and details for our first bond "drive" were worked out. Agents, orators, hucksters and pitchmen were sent into every hamlet. They whooped it up for the bonds, using medicine man techniques, and it was a great success. Bond sales rose to $12,000,000 a week and the big money men were astonished to discover just how rich this country was.

These bonds offered a slick gimmick to get rich quick at government expense. The six per cent interest on the bonds was payable in gold, but the bonds could be bought with paper money, and a paper dollar was worth much less than a gold dollar.

Now, gold was selling on the stock exchange at 150. Let's say a fellow had a thousand dollars in gold. With it he bought $1500 in greenbacks. Then he bought a $1500 bond bearing six per cent gold-paying interest. His $1500 now was bringing him $90 a year in interest—nine per cent on his investment. The government must redeem the bonds at par and in gold. For $1500 in greenbacks he got back $1500 in gold, or about 50 per cent on his $1000. Slick, huh? The United States was paying as high as 15 per cent to borrow money.

But financing was not the only mess. Americans actually were afraid to speak out. Free speech became a crime and soldiers raided newspaper and magazine offices. Publications were suppressed without warning. Communications were seized and about 36,000 Northern citizens were jailed for speaking or writing against the administration.

William H. Seward, Secretary of State, actually boasted that he had more power than Queen Victoria, exclaiming, "I

can send any man to prison, with or without cause, and keep him there."

Sales taxes appeared on everything: 2¢ a pound on sugar, a few pennies on matches and $2.00 a gallon on whiskey. Our first income tax came into effect and five per cent was levied on incomes from $600 to $5,000. A 10 per cent bite was taken from incomes of more than $5,000.

To get volunteers into the army, bounties were paid by counties and states. In New York City, for example, a man who already had served an enlistment could get $777 if he re-enlisted. Some con men enlisted in one county, got bounties, deserted, then enlisted in another county, got more bounties—and made the rounds. Thieves, rascals and mountebanks poured into the Union army. They made poor soldiers and sometimes wouldn't fight. One New York regiment actually mutinied rather than go to the front in Virginia.

The United States passed its first conscription act in 1863. It was a terrible thing, cold-bloodedly manipulated in favor of the well-off. Any able-bodied man could buy an exemption by paying the government $300. Further, if a man didn't have $300, he might buy a substitute for less, usually some immigrant just off the boat who was willing to take a chance for a hundred bucks. This "substitute" law gave rise to one of the jokes of the day, the housewife who told her neighbor, "My husband ain't going to war. He sent a *prostitute*."

The conscription act brought to New York City the bloodiest riots in our history. A lot of buncombe has been written about the draft riots to put the sting on foreigners and on workingmen who participated in them, and they were almost as much race riots as draft riots. Unjust conscription was the tinder that blazed, but a labor dispute was the spark that lighted the tinder.

New York's longshoremen had struck for more money and their jobs had been taken over by Negro strikebreakers who were protected by armed guards. Then the strikers were drafted into the army, to face death to give freedom to Negro slaves whose cousins had taken their jobs.

It was too much. The longshoremen got mad and pretty soon the riots were underway. Nobody knows how many were killed or how much damage was done. Things calmed down only when New York City agreed to appropriate $2,500,000 from which poor men could draw the $300 that would purchase exemption from military service.

It was mighty sordid and nasty. And, yet, to the everlasting glory of this republic, thousands upon thousands of Northern citizens willingly offered themselves to their country; both rich and poor. The millions of good men looked so clean and shiny because the thousands of scoundrels were so dirty. In the North, in many many cases, the rich got richer and the poor did the dying although many rich men died just as heroically as did poor men. More poor folks were heroes simply because there were more poor folks.

The North's foul Civil War linen has been washed in public for years and hung on the clothesline to mildew. But what of the South's dirty wash?

A part of the Southern myth that has fastened itself to our national legends is the folderol that Dixie rose to a man to defend her hearths from the invading Yankees. It just isn't so.

Morale and patriotism were strong in the early days of the Confederacy although the new republic was by no means united. After a few victories in the field, the war party was firmly in the saddle and the folks were singing and jubilating all over the place. A lady schoolteacher donated her salary to the Confederacy. A Charleston lady gave her silverware, an

Arkansas widow her cotton and a private soldier who was killed in action willed his estate to the government.

There even was a brief honeymoon between President Jefferson Davis and his congresses (there were three of them) and then dissension latched on like hookworms. It was inevitable. Davis was as stubborn as Lincoln but had none of his charm and not a smidgen of his patience. He was no dope and his congress was no dupe, but they were so far apart on so many things that the team simply could not pull together.

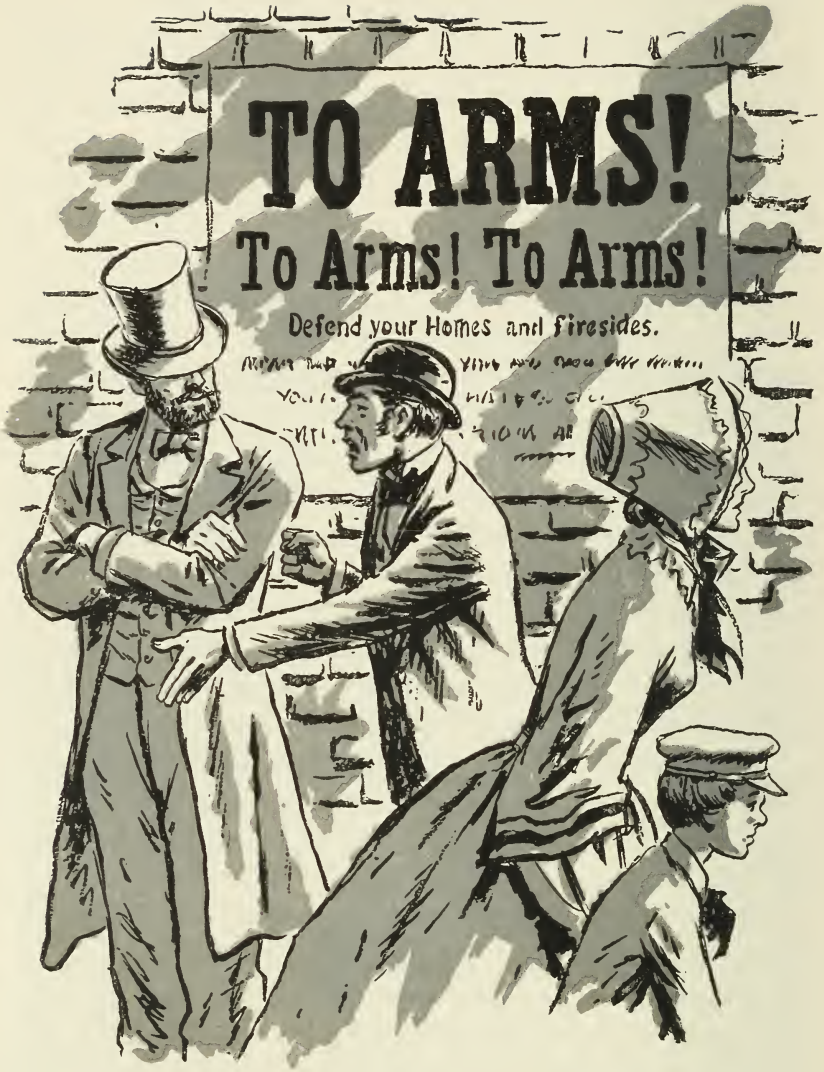
Southern governors had as much power within their states as the Confederacy, and often more, and some of these governors hated Davis almost as much as they hated Yankees.

Regretfully, I suggest that by 1861 many Southern leaders had grown weary of democracy and distrusted it. The land that sired Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry and Andrew Jackson was beginning to fear democracy as rule by the mob, and many were the cotton satraps who spoke out for oligarchy.

Except for his theories on State's Rights, Thomas Jefferson had been heaved out of the south window and the front door was open to the governmental ideas of Alexander Hamilton and John Adams. These leaders believed in an aristocracy and that government should rest in the hands of the informed, of the cultured; and that the masses should be governed but never allowed to govern.

Lincoln, losing battles, was having it mighty rough, but Jefferson Davis was having it even rougher while winning battles. His own people soon were calling him tyrant, idiot and dictator. Like Lincoln, and every strong president in our history, he was accused of just about every crime except beating his grandmother. The same old chorus of hate. It never fails.

Civil law began to break down in the Confederacy by 1862


TO ARMS!
To Arms! To Arms!
Defend your Homes and Firesides.

and in some cases the military took over and in other cases vigilantes became judge, jury and jailor. A lot of innocent folks were pushed around and some were imprisoned or exiled. The pattern was the same as in the North, only it was not as loud or as large.

By the winter of '61 it was obvious that the South could not get enough volunteers to protect herself. We have sneered at Yankees for offering bounties, but by January of 1862 the South was offering a bounty of $50 a head for all enlistments. State governments began to withhold their troops and the Confederacy was compelled to resort to all sorts of whoopla and benefits to get men into the armies.

Conscription was the only answer and in April of 1862 the Confederate Congress passed the first conscription act in American history. Jefferson Davis was for it and General Lee was for it. Many of the folks shrieked bloody murder at Davis although they didn't dare revile Lee.

The Southern draft acts, and there were several of them, were not quite as terrible as the North's, but they were plenty bad. Conscientious objectors were exempt as were preachers, and pretty soon the South reverberated with hallelujahs as hundreds of draft-dodgers donned the cloth to escape military duty. This loophole quickly was plugged.

The law provided that all "able-bodied" men must serve. A passel of Southern patriots got sick quick. Gout, rheumatism and old age suddenly became popular. The standard legal fee for getting a man exempted was $500, and lawyers reaped a bonanza.

To this very day, we Southerners jeer the Yankees who hired substitutes to do their fighting. But we did the same thing until the "substitute law" was revoked and it has been estimated that about 50,000 Southern soldiers were substi-

tutes. This figure cannot compare with the North's figure for two good reasons: (a) most Southerners didn't have money enough to hire substitutes and (b) there were not many substitutes available because pretty soon the draft was scraping the bottom of the barrel.

The most galling provision in the Southern conscription act was the clause that exempted any man who had as many as 20 slaves or 500 head of cattle or 250 head of horses. The idea basically was sound—that a big producing farmer could serve better by growing food than by fighting.

Nevertheless, it was this clause that raised the famous Southern cry of "A rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

Thousands upon thousands of Southerners hid in the woods to escape army service. Be danged if they aimed to get killed for some rich slave holder. The 20-slave clause quickly was repealed, but the damage was done.

Little backyard rebellions broke out all over the South. The best-known of these was in Jones County, Mississippi, where a faction set up its own government that actually seceded from the state and waged war against the Confederacy. These "Free Staters" as they were called were not so much pro-Union as they were anti-Confederate. And they were not Abolitionists. They were too poor to own slaves, and hated Negroes almost as much as they hated planters who were rich enough to own Negroes.

Romantically, these nests of rebellion were interesting, but actually they didn't cut much ice. Most of them were put down by some second-class fighting and some first-class hangings.

Fantastic as it may seem, many fortunes were made in the Confederate States by crooked contractors, sharpies of various sorts and blockade runners. These blockade boys deserve

a special scrutiny because our romantic histories have treated them mighty nice. For three years they ran by the Union blockade like gnats around a bear. But did they bring in stuff that the South had to have? Not all of them. Good Lord, no. The big money was not in medicines and other essentials. It was in finery for Southern ladies, and that's what they brought in—linen handkerchiefs, silk gloves, toilet soap. An English linen handkerchief fetched $25 at the same time the monthly pay of a Confederate soldier was $18. And this $18 was in Confederate money and was worth about 90¢ in gold.

It has been estimated that the blockade was run 8,250 times. The *Robert E. Lee* made 21 trips and hauled out $2,000,000 worth of cotton. The *Hattie* made 60 trips.

Some of them did bring back things that were really needed and the figures have been set at 600,000 small arms, 550,000 pairs of shoes, 8,500,000 pounds of meat and 400,000 blankets.

The blockade did not begin to pinch badly until 1863, but by 1864 it was choking the South to death. Of course, the Confederacy could not mount a counter blockade, but Secretary of the Navy Mallory performed something of a miracle by building a Confederate fleet from nothing. He organized a Marine Corps, a Naval Academy, a Torpedo and Submarine School, ordnance plants, shipyards etc. His ships destroyed more than 350 Union craft, bludgeoned the Northern fleet a few times and stung it often.

His most famous ship was the Confederate raider *Alabama*, British built and commanded by Raphael Semmes, who was called the "brigand of the high seas" by the Northern press. Before it was sunk by the *Kearsarge*, the *Alabama* destroyed 58 Union ships.

Mallory's navy also built midget submarines that didn't quite submerge entirely or else submerged forever. The best

of these was the *H. L. Hunley*, also spelled *Hundley*. It was propelled by cranks turned by the crew. During trial runs, she went down four times, losing four crews. But each time the Confeds hauled her back up and finally she crashed a torpedo against the Federal *Housatonic*. Both craft were lost. In all, some 30 Union vessels were sunk by Confederate torpedoes.

I have read somewhere, but I can't put my hand on it so don't pin me down, that the *Hundley* was the last American submarine to sink an enemy warship by torpedo until World War II.

Yankee ingenuity has become a byword in our country and, yet, Southern ingenuity during the Civil War flabbergasted the Yankees and even surprised Southerners. With leather at a premium, the South soon was making wooden shoes, and

good ones. Little foundries sprang up all around and tip-top small arms were made. Nitrogen for gunpowder was extracted from urine hoarded by the donors, usually women, and many a good man bit the dust therefrom.

Opium poppies were grown to get narcotics, but there never were enough sedatives, quinine, salt or iron. Needles were made from hawthorn, cork from cypress, blackening from chinaberries, rope from Spanish moss, soda from corn cobs, and coffee from peas, parched corn, okra and pumpkin seeds.

Sorghum was used for sugar, figs for red dye, pomegranates for black dye, indigo for blue and sumac for purple. Copperas was a favorite coloring. It was made by soaking iron in salt and vinegar water.

However, with her woods full of mast and acorns, the South never raised enough swine. The lofty planters had an antipathy to pig-raising because it was not dignified. Interestingly enough, there was so much corn planted in the South that Yankee soldiers from the midwest corn belt were surprised; and it was this corn that later helped feed the invading army.

A famous German general, von Moltke I think it was, infuriated Americans with the statement that our Civil War was fought between two armed mobs. He wasn't as far wrong as our patriotism might insist. Neither the Confederate nor Union armies ever were really disciplined armies in the European sense. Desertions and insolence were rampant on both sides. Even cowardice was too common. Soldiers straggled on the march and slept on duty. Military courts usually were lax when they should have been firm and then merciless when they should have been lenient. Johnny Reb

and Billy Yank were first-class warriors, but second-class military men.

Tobacco and whiskey were the soldiers' constant companions. Pipes were favored even over chewing tobacco and the South actually imported European cigarettes, the first cigarettes used in these parts. Whiskey was a problem, such a problem that some Southern states prohibited the use of corn for distillation purposes. It almost is unbelievable how many times things got fouled up because soldiers were drunk and officers drunker; and on both sides.

The North prayed against booze and the South made jokes about it. One Southern editor wrote that Civil War whiskey would "conglomerate the vesicles of the aorta, phlogistify the phylacter maximus, hemstitch up the depatic ducts, insulate the asperifollus gland, deflagate the dudonian process, and wilt the buttons on the waistcoat."

Confederate General Bragg forbade whiskey in his army except as medicine and later Adjutant General Cooper prohibited it in all Southern armies except in cases of "fatigue and exposure." As usual, prohibition failed.

I can't find that liquor ever was forbidden in the Union Army. After all, Yankee drinks were on the Southern house.

A lot of boys died from bad booze, but not so many died from bad women because venereal diseases were comparatively uncommon. Profanity was grandiloquent.

Romanticists can moon and mouth from here to eternity about the glories of the Civil War, but "the last war between gentlemen" was a nasty mess. Even most of the songs were pretty dreary. Oh, I know there were a few fine ones. *Dixie* is the best fight song since the *Marseillaise* and the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* is one of the most stirring songs ever written. Personally, I wish it were our national anthem.

The South, although being beat to death, seemed to enjoy

singing more than the North. Most of the Northern songs were about mother and death and gloom, while the South sang about food and the yellow rose of Texas. Forgive me, but except for the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* I don't like any of the Yankee songs. But the South had a pretty good one in *Mister, Here's Your Mule* and *Goober Peas.*

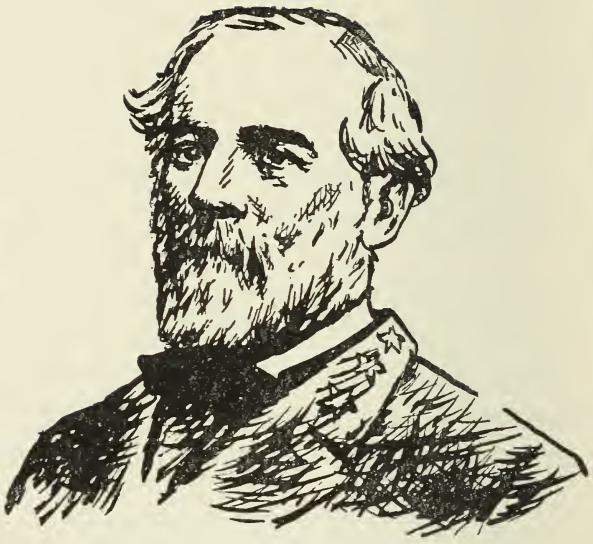
Just before the battle the General hears a row,
He says, "The Yanks are coming, I hear their rifles now,"
He turns around in wonder, and what do you think he sees?
The Georgia militia eating goober peas!

The most beautiful song of the Civil War was sung by both sides, like *Lili Marlene* in World War II. It was called *Lorena* and its origin is obscure. But it was a lovely thing:

The years creep slowly by, Lorena,
The snow is on the grass again;
The sun's low down the sky, Lorena,
The frost gleams where the flowers have been,—"

Someday some tunester is going to discover it and hurl it at us from every jukebox. Sorry I brought it up.

7



The Battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia in 1863 was the best-planned and best-executed battle of the Civil War, remembering that Vicksburg and Atlanta were campaigns and not battles.

Fighting Joe Hooker was given command of the Army of the Potomac and Hooker was a third-rate general except when fighting the bottle and sounding off about how good he was. He had 130,000 troops and Lee had 60,000. He wrote for posterity that "our enemy must either ingloriously fly, or come from behind his defenses and give us battle on our own ground, where certain destruction awaits him."

And then Fighting Joe sat down on his hooker and Lee made a jackass out of him.

Deliberately and in contempt of the Army of the Potomac,

Lee divided his army and sent Stonewall Jackson on a forced march to envelop the Yankees while he pulled them off balance in the middle of the line. Hooker simply did not know what was going on. Lee feigned a line buck over center and set Hooker up for a mouse-trap play. But Jackson had the ball. With 28,000 men—almost half the army—he made a fifteen-mile end run behind screened interference and then cut into Hooker's line, taking out the end and the tackle. He was diving for the backfield when darkness came.

The Army of the Potomac folded up like an accordion. It deserved better generals.

Chancellorsville was a fantastic victory for the Confederacy although it cost the life of Old Jack Jackson. Confederate pickets shot him by accident. Dying, he said, "Let us pass over the river and rest under the shade of the trees," thereby giving Ernest Hemingway the title for one of his lesser novels.

Lee apparently was invincible even at odds of one to two and the South decided to invade the North and for a combination of reasons: first, to whip Yankees, secondly, to give the North a dose of its own medicine, thirdly, to get supplies, and fourthly, to relieve pressure on Vicksburg, Mississippi, a thousand miles away.

The South had fortified Vicksburg into the strongest fort of the Confederacy and Grant had been pawing at it for months. He had plenty of ships, supplies and men, but he had lapsed into one of those Grantian moods of mediocrity and he wasn't getting anywhere. He was drinking again and, besides, he had lost his false teeth.

Vicksburg was defended by General John Pemberton of Pennsylvania, suspect in the South because he was a North-

erner, but a much better man than many of the generals who have criticized him.

Jefferson Davis realized the strategic importance of Vicksburg and was determined to hold it, although many folks along the Southern seaboard thought it was just another river town out in the western wilderness. Davis even considered

ordering Lee to the defense of Vicksburg, but the idea never jelled. For Lee to fight in Mississippi's slimy swamps instead of Virginia's clean hills seemed like a sacrilege, so the Confederacy sent Lee rolling north to pull some of the strain off Vicksburg.

Pemberton was firmly entrenched and kept blasting Grant

and was all right as long as he could get supplies from the back country. Then Grant, or somebody, had one of the most brilliant ideas of the war.

Benjamin Henry Grierson—there was a great cavalryman —took 1,700 men and rode 600 miles in 16 days and tore up the country behind Vicksburg. It was an astounding feat, an accomplishment worthy of any of the more publicized Southern cavalrymen. Grierson was a Pennsylvania Irishman and a crackerjack soldier.

It was his raid that set the Union pattern of things to come; kill, burn and rip. After Grierson had cut Mississippi from stem to stern, Vicksburg really began to sweat and General Joseph Eggleston Johnston was ordered to raise a Confederate army and relieve the city. Johnston hated Jefferson Davis, as did a lot of Southerners, and he had been wounded and still was sick. He moved like a tortoise and now the Confederacy needed a rabbit.

Grant finally figured out the only way to take Vicksburg and marched his army down the west bank of the Mississippi river and got below Vicksburg, which is on the east bank. He ferried across the river and was on his way to Vicksburg's back door. Some of his men dashed down and raided Jefferson Davis' home and stole a horse for General Grant. He named him Jeff Davis.

And then U. S. Grant shook off his mediocrity and, for a few weeks, became a real general. He cut entirely free from his line of supplies and wheeled north, lashing Confederates on both sides. The brilliant maneuver was Leeian in concept and Jacksonian in execution. He quickly was at Vicksburg's side door and Pemberton came out of his trenches to meet him.

This was the hour for Joseph Eggleston Johnston to move

in and squeeze Grant between his army and Pemberton's. But General Johnston never quite got the lead out of his Eggleston. For sure, he didn't have much army and few supplies. Nathan Bedford Forrest would have come in there chunking rocks, but General Johnston piddled. Pemberton was out on a limb and Grant slapped him flat and Pemberton hurried his army back into the trenches of Vicksburg.

It was a thoroughly botched up affair—Johnston yelling for Pemberton to cut his way out, Pemberton yelling for Johnston to cut his way in and Jefferson Davis just yelling, while Grant chewed his cigar and smote Confederates on head and thigh.

When the confusion cleared, Mississippi's capital of Jackson was in flames, the first Southern capital to be burned. Johnston had drawn back a safe distance. Pemberton was cooped up in Vicksburg and Grant was creeping in for the kill.

As Chancellorsville was the classic battle, Vicksburg was the classic siege. Inch by inch and week by week, the Federals clawed up the bluffs, drawing a noose around the town that was as tight as wet rawhide. The defenders and townspeople lived in caves and on mule meat and rats and fought as long as they had anything to fight with. But Grant had Vicksburg by the throat and literally choked it to death. The city was surrendered officially on July 4, 1863.

The North captured an army of only 30,000 at Vicksburg, but the Mississippi river was in Union hands. The scorpion's stinger had been pulled. Now all that was left were its front legs over in Tennessee, its belly in Georgia and its head in Virginia.

Meanwhile, Lee was on the move. He had the largest and best army of the Confederacy's history when he invaded

Pennsylvania. His idea was to march rapidly into the North and then sweep southward upon Washington.

This campaign—the Gettysburg campaign—really was an enormous military raid, a diversion on a grand scale. The Federals could have stopped it in its tracks by thrusting for Richmond, but Fighting Joe Hooker, still in command, was not smart enough to think that out.

So Lee rolled north, up the Cumberland valley and across the Mason-Dixon line that separates Maryland and Pennsylvania. His stern orders against plundering and straggling were enforced to the letter.

Town after town in Pennsylvania fell without a shot being fired. Lee's men paid for everything they took, in Confederate money to be redeemed later. Many of the butternut boys, as Pennsylvanians called the Secesh, had shoes for the first time in a year, and good beef and bread. Lee said: "There never were such men in an army before. They will go anywhere and do anything if properly led."

Notice how Lee gave credit to his men, and this in contrast to generals who took all credit to themselves. Notice,

also, the disciplined behavior of invading Confederates in startling contrast to Northern plundering in the South. Much has been made of this by Southern partisans. The reasons were simple. Lee was not a burning general. Also, he wanted supplies—he had rather have shoes than a burned-out shoe factory. And, above all, the South wanted to make friends in the North and abroad by showing the world that her men were soldiers and not vandals. It was smart propaganda.

The town of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania was entered and nice, plump Yankee girls lined the streets and taunted the Confeds and the Southerners laughed at them and maybe whistled. One lady draped a flag across her bosom and a Texan from Hood's brigade warned her, "Take care, madam, for Hood's boys are great at storming breastworks when the Yankee colors are on them—" A crack that has been charged to goodness knows how many wags.

Another lady sang *The Star Spangled Banner* and General Lee took off his hat and rode on. He was making friends for his side, and don't you forget it.

In Greencastle, Pennsylvania, a pretty girl draped her hips

in the Union flag and called out, "Come and take it, the man who dares."

Several boys were for accommodating her, but their officers rebuked them. They must behave like "Southern gentlemen." Hot ziggety!

The Mayor of York, Pennsylvania, went out and surrendered his town and paid a levy of 40,000 pounds of beef, 30,000 bushels of corn, 1,000 pairs of shoes and $28,000.

The next stop was a little place in a fringe of hills, the village of Gettysburg—a whoop from Baltimore and Washington and a couple of hollers from Philadelphia and New York.

George Gordon Meade had taken over command of the Army of the Potomac, the irascible, book-loving Meade, who ranks with Sherman and George Henry Thomas ("Rock of Chickamauga") as the best generals in the Union army. (Grant and his clique were jealous of Meade; and there was an agreement among newspaper reporters not to mention Meade in print because he had hung a "liar" sign around a reporter's neck.)

The Federal and Confederate armies were sort of wandering around looking for each other and came together at Gettysburg. Meade saw the defensive possibilities and dug in. Many of Lee's generals, particularly James Longstreet, advised their commander to skip Gettysburg and fight elsewhere. But Lee elected to have it out right there, to go for the knockout. He had won so often that surely he could win again. He could give the Federals all the advantage and still win. The error of invincibility is one of the few errors Lee ever committed.

Gettysburg is the great storied battle of the war and I still

wonder how come and many times I have asked—"Why?" I always get unacceptable answers.

Usually I am told—"Because Gettysburg was the high tide of the Confederacy."

But it wasn't. The Confederacy's military tide reached its flood at Chancellorsville and its political tide was highest in 1861.

Then—"Because Gettysburg was so important."

However, New Orleans, Vicksburg, Chattanooga and Atlanta strategically were of far more importance.

Because the battle was so bloody.

Yet, there was bloodier fighting at Shiloh, Antietam, Chickamauga and Franklin.

Because the South was crushed at Gettysburg.

Nothing of the sort. Union losses surpassed Confederate losses and Lee's retreat not only was orderly but his men kept snarling over their shoulders at the Northerners, and the Union army either dared not or could not follow up and renew the fighting. Lee stayed in the North nine days after Gettysburg and Meade didn't raise a fist to crush him.

Because it was the classic battle of the war.

Balderdash. It was Lee's worst-fought battle and whereas it was not the Union's worst battle, it certainly was not the best, not in the class with Vicksburg or Atlanta. Militarily, it was a bungled affair on both sides.

Because it was "the beginning of the end."

Actually, it was only the fifth inning. Spikes didn't begin to fly until the seventh inning when the combatants threw out the umpire and began to beat one another over the head with the water buckets.

So why?

I hazard these suggestions:

Because at Gettysburg the great Lee was stopped, the unsinkable *Titanic* struck the iceberg and it caught the fancy of the world, regardless of facts.

Because this battle was fought in the *North*, closer to New York than to Richmond and closer to Boston than to Charleston, South Carolina. Our first impressions of the Civil War, the ones that really count because they permeated our national mind as far back as grammar school, were written by the winners, as always. It was years before the South began to get in her literary and journalistic licks. (Once we got started, we out-shouted and out-bragged the Yankees and pulled our bows just as long—maybe even longer.)

Our popular conceptions of history follow headlines and the headlines of the Civil War were written, although not made, in New York, Boston and Philadelphia. Therefore, Gettysburg was *their* fight, the one close to home, and so it had to be the biggest and the best.

And then Gettysburg is the place where Lincoln spoke. His words are the greatest monument to any battlefield.

Therefore, I contend that Gettysburg is our great battle of Hollywood, historical novels, Fourth of July orations and Commencement exercises because of flukes and not of facts.

It lasted three days, July 1-3, 1863. The casualties were more than 50,000. Geography won. There were several knockdowns, but no knockouts and the South lost the decision on points. This is the battle in which a Confederate jumped up and yelled to his comrades, "Come on! You want to live forever?" This challenge later was attributed to Marines in World War I. The chances are it first was shouted by one of Joshua's men at Jericho.

Lee began his retreat on July 4, the same day that Vicksburg was being surrendered almost at the other end of the country.

Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas were out on the end of the broken vine and were withering in their isolation. Mississippi was ground into cinders and by Sherman, who learned how to do it a long time before he got to Georgia. Alabama, excepting Mobile, was of no great strategic importance and was left dangling. The Secesh had burned the Yanks badly at Chickamauga, just outside Chattanooga but in Georgia, and a Federal army was bottled up in Chattanooga.

Most of Tennessee had been cut wide open along her railroads and rivers, and Grant was sent over to Chattanooga to finish off the state. Gen. W. F. Smith did most of the Yankee planning at Chattanooga, but Grant got the credit for the Union victory there. He was the darling of the gods.

The Confederacy, by 1864, virtually was constricted to the Atlantic seaboard. The fifth inning was over and it was time for the North to change pitchers again, and this time they called in U. S. Grant. He chose Sherman as his battery mate.

Congress created the rank of lieutenant general and Lincoln upped Grant as high as he could go and made him boss of all Union armies. Davis should have done the same thing for Lee, but Lee was never the senior officer of the Confederacy.

It was the spring of '64 and Grant's strategy was as simple as that of a mastiff fighting a porcupine—wear down the Southern armies and destroy them. He would push for Richmond; Sherman for Atlanta. The Confederacy still had more than 400,000 men on her muster rolls and about 200,000 of these under arms. The Union had about 900,000 on her rolls and about 500,000 present and for combat duty.

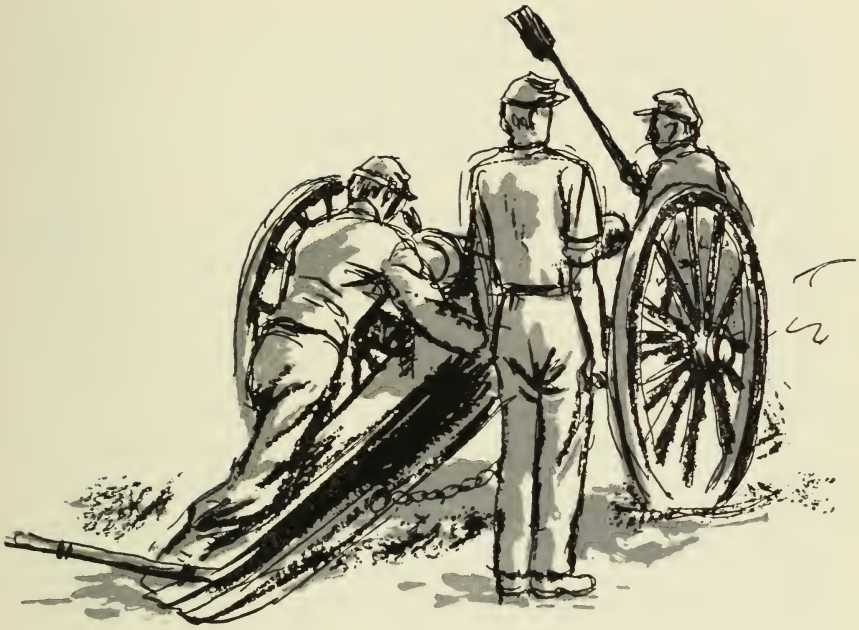
Grant pawed out at Lee, and Lee almost bit off his hand. This was the Battle of the Wilderness and Lee out-cuted Grant at every turn. Grant just stood there and poured men at the Confederates until the Army of the Potomac almost was drowned in its own blood and the North wailed its protest against the slaughter.

This was when Grant boasted: "I propose to fight it out along this line if it takes all summer—" a silly vaunt that has gone into history as a brave pronouncement.

The Battle of Cold Harbor jolted him. It lasted only an hour. Grant lost 7,000 men. The Confederates lost 600. But Grant kept plugging, seemingly indifferent to his losses and the North began to distrust him and his army was near unto mutiny.

He crawled from the Rapidan River to the James River and lost 55,000 men, almost as many men as Lee had in his army. But reinforcements kept pouring in, three Northerners moving in where two had been before. The Union was suffering casualties that would have dissipated most armies and yet they kept coming in; an endless stream of conscripts, substitutes and volunteers. Lee's army, dazed and half dead, was handing out far more punishment than it was taking, but the Confederates had to give three times as much and take three times as little to balance the ratio.

Grant did not fight it out on that line. He was stopped and again he lapsed into mediocrity, the lethargy of a clumsy bear



that fights a while and then goes to sleep. He even wept, not for all those dead men but because his own plans had been frustrated.

All in all, Grant had done fair to middling, even pretty good. However, a really great general could have done twice as much at half the cost. He finally got it through his head that he could not take Richmond by sledgehammer assaults and instead of fighting as he had vowed to do, he laid siege to Richmond, and this didn't work.

But there he maneuvered and pawed from June, 1864, to the spring of 1865. And it was not Lee, Lincoln or Luck (his best asset) who compelled him finally to use his brain more and his brawn less and to give his magnificent army a chance to win—it was Sherman who did it, his own battery mate who should have been calling the signals all along.

A single railroad connected Chattanooga and Atlanta, and

from Atlanta several railroads fanned out into the most important web of communications south of Virginia. As long as Atlanta stood the Confederacy could move troops and supplies up and down the seaboard. Therefore, Atlanta must be taken.

Sherman had more than 100,000 men and about 23,000 horses. Opposing him was Joseph Eggleston Johnston with about 50,000 men. Joe Johnston has been kicked around a lot by history, but he was a much better soldier than his critics admit. His men loved and trusted him although Jefferson Davis despised him and he loathed Jefferson Davis.

The odds were about right for the campaign against Atlanta, the odds of two to one in favor of the North. But remember the Yankees had to attack and were a long ways from home. Also, they were dependent upon that one little railroad from Chattanooga. The Confederates kept cutting it and the Federals kept repairing it. The real stalwarts of the Atlanta campaign were the Union engineers. They won Atlanta as much as any rifleman or general.

Sherman brought his army straight down the railroad and kept trying to trap Johnston into open battle. Johnston kept falling back, stinging Sherman but never sticking out his own neck. Sherman would flank and Johnston would ease back, clawing like a cat facing a pack of hounds.

Strategically, it was Sherman who was getting into trouble and he knew it. A flash raider like Forrest might cut in behind him at any minute, wreck his supply line and leave him stuck down there in Georgia. But strangely enough the Confederates never called on Forrest for this job. The big Southern brass didn't like Forrest. He didn't salute properly and didn't write many memos.

It began to look as if Johnston might give up Atlanta with-

out a fight and Jefferson Davis got itchy. It was a preposterous assumption—that Johnston wouldn't fight. He was waiting for his time and place, but Davis simply couldn't keep his mouth out of his generals' business.

So back and back Johnston fell, almost a hundred miles from Chattanooga and mighty close to Atlanta. His army was intact and in good spirits and he was waiting for his moment.

Kennesaw Mountain is a hill north of Atlanta and properly did Johnston fortify it and improperly did Sherman try to storm it rather than flank it. He lost 3,000 men in a few minutes. A Union soldier named Landis survived the engagement and named his son after it—the Judge Kennesaw Mountain Landis of judicial and baseball fame.

Two other famous events occurred near Kennesaw Mountain, actually at the village of Allatoona, about thirteen miles from the mountain. The Federals had turned Allatoona into an enormous supply depot and Union General Corse was defending the supplies when Confederate General French jumped him. A minor skirmish was fought. Sherman was on Kennesaw Mountain and wigwagged a signal to Corse, asking how things were going.

Corse had been nicked by a Minie ball and wigwagged back, "I am short a cheekbone and an ear, but am able to whip all hell yet."

This is when Sherman signaled back: "Hold the fort! I am coming."

However, he didn't come. He sat on the mountain and wigwagged pep talks to Corse and this is one of the few times in history that a cheerleader got credit for winning the game.

As a matter of fact, Confederate General French drove Corse out of two redoubts at Allatoona and was in position to set fire to the Yankee supplies. But there were only three

matches in his little army; and they wouldn't strike. So he lit a shuck out of there, possibly looking for more matches. Right about then the South could have used a couple of Boy Scouts instead of all the Rhett Butlers and Scarlett O'Haras in Georgia.

From the Confederate point of view, Jefferson Davis committed the biggest blunder of the Atlanta campaign. He removed Joe Johnston and put General John Hood in command. Even Lee agreed to the change. Lee should have known better.

The army wept at the news. They trusted Johnston and didn't trust Hood, the wild Texan who could whip his weight in wildcats. Unfortunately, the South wasn't fighting wildcats. She was fighting Sherman and 100,000 first-rate soldiers.

Anyway, Hood took over just outside Atlanta and immediately turned to slug it out with Sherman. His army was poleaxed. Atlanta fell and now the South's belly was ripped open.

Sherman fortified the city as though expecting Hood to try to retake it. But oh, no. For a while Hood stuck around and harassed Sherman and kept him in a tizzy, and then Jefferson

Davis butted in again and sent Hood's army back to Tennessee. It was at Franklin and Nashville that this hard-luck army ran into two Yankee armies, Thomas' and Schofield's, and was cut into little bitty pieces. Old Joe Johnston was called back from the showers and he patched up the pieces and kept on fighting.

There was no Confederate army at Atlanta when Sherman elected to take off for Savannah and the sea. This is the hour that still causes Georgians to get white with rage and froth at the mouth. Sherman burned Atlanta. He already had emptied the city of noncombatants. He had just simply told the women and children and old folks to pack up and get out, and it wasn't his responsibility where they went.

A military necessity—so said Sherman.

Monstrous brutality—so said the South.

Just why did he burn Atlanta? The Confederate army was gone and the civilians were gone. Sherman says he burned it because it was a fort and he could not have a fort in his rear. Some Georgians say he burned it because he was a trigger-happy scoundrel who was careless with matches. Take your choice.

Until his death, Sherman kept explaining the burning of Atlanta and the burning of Columbia, South Carolina. He makes out a good case for himself, for Sherman was the best writing-general on either side. He had a way with words, quite like our General MacArthur of later days. Sometimes, however, Sherman had no respect for the civil liberties of facts and didn't always tell the truth even when he knew the facts—but he was a mighty good writing man. He was out to win a war and it looks like he figured that the only way to win it was to burn, scorch, rip and kill.

Well, he won it.

His march from Atlanta to the sea was no contest. There was no real army to oppose him. It was like an elephant crossing a pea patch. His men got out of hand and looted and burned, stealing even trinkets and burning even the fence posts. Georgia was devastated and Sherman cut up into South Carolina; waste and misery and charred ruins in his path as he followed Joe Johnston's long retreat.

It was all over, only there was no referee to stop the fight. The South kept going down for the count of nine, each time getting up more painfully than before. Maybe she needed a better manager, but that really wasn't the trouble. Her fatal weakness now was obvious. The Confederate States of America never were united states; only a nation stillborn.

Lee's men were ghosts and Johnston's men were skeletons. Confederate desertions were rampant. Sherman was getting glory while Grant, stuck up in Virginia, was getting cussed. Lincoln had been re-elected and Sherman's victories had been mighty good campaign propaganda. Then Sherman left Georgia to the vultures and moved north, burning his way through South Carolina and into North Carolina, and was getting close to Virginia.

This would never do. Let Sherman invade Virginia? Maybe even take Richmond? He was getting the big play in the newspapers, and the fearful thought that Sherman might wind up the No. 1 hero while he was No. 2 yanked Ulysses Grant out of his lethargy.

Months before, he had begun flanking in Virginia as Sherman had done in Georgia and had worked an army around Richmond and to the town of Petersburg and laid siege.

It was at Petersburg that the South really made her last stand; a dazed hornet trying to stop a clumsy bear.

The South still had about 158,000 men under arms. The North had about 800,000.

Sherman was crawling northward and Grant made one more lunge and overran Lee's thin line and took Richmond. Lee tried to get to the mountains to keep fighting, but Grant cornered him at Appomattox, 80 miles from Richmond. The Army of Northern Virginia passed into a few accurate history books, a hundred biased ones and a slew of historical novels.

R. E. Lee surrendered 28,000 men to Grant's 120,000. That was April 9, 1865. Grant gave wise and generous terms. Lee lost his army, but kept his dignity and came out of the war sharing the top glory role with Abraham Lincoln. He told the South that old soldiers just fade away, and by gum he did it. He was offered a big job with an insurance company, but his reputation was not for sale and he went to Lexington, Virginia—to what now is Washington & Lee University—and there he taught boys how to be good citizens; and told them to quit squabbling about the Civil War and to get to work and rebuild the South.

Joe Johnston surrendered 31,000 men to Sherman's army near Durham, North Carolina, on April 26. The Department of Alabama surrendered 42,000 men, the Army of Missouri surrendered 7,000, the Transmississippi Department 17,000 and the Department of Florida 7,000.

One by one the scattered forces gave in while some of the leaders chose exile to surrender. Jefferson Davis was hunted down and captured and put in prison. He was never formally charged with anything and never got a trial.

The Northern generals gave liberal terms to the Confederate soldiers, but Congress reneged and decided to treat the South as a conquered province, and then Reconstruction was started—a reeking blotch. It wasn't Lincoln's idea of uniting

the country. It was Congress' idea of the quickest and cheapest way to get power for the Republican party.

Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865 while sitting in a theater and watching a play; a pretty bad play.

His assassin was John Wilkes Booth of Maryland, who had had no connection whatsoever with the Confederacy. He was an actor, an egomaniac and as crazy as a betsybug.

Booth himself was shot to death in a burning barn by Sgt. Boston Corbitt, a lunatic who went around shouting "Glory to God" and was called the "Glory to God boy." However, he was a demon in battle and laid many a Secesh low. A few years later, while doorkeeper for the Kansas legislature, Brother Glory-to-God Corbitt went berserk and emptied two revolvers at the legislators. He missed them all.

Mrs. Lincoln's mind wandered beyond the fringes of insanity and Major Henry Rathbone, who was with the President the night he was assassinated, went stark mad and killed his wife and himself.

Annie Surrett tried to get to President Andrew Johnson to plead for the life of her mother, Mrs. Mary Surrett whose conviction for the Lincoln conspiracy was tainted, even rotten. Annie Surrett was blocked by Preston King, a New York politician, and Senator James Lane of Kansas. Within a year King loaded his pockets with lead and stepped off a New York ferry, and Lane shot himself. Edmund Ruffin, who fired the first shot at Fort Sumter, blew out his brains.

The last great war between gentlemen started off in the stars and ended in the gutter.

Eventually, the carpetbaggers were run out of the South or absorbed, and then came native sons seeking favors by waving the Stars and Bars and singing *Dixie*. These are still with us,

always as infuriating as chiggers, sometimes as dangerous as tapeworms.

An old Confederate veteran (he was my grandpa-in-law) heard one of these stump orators rhapsodizing the paths of glory that the South had trod in the Civil War. The old man called out, "Wait a minute, brother! What the hell was civil about it?"

8

Inasmuch as the Civil War shares the American shelf with sex, politics, religion and money as a subject for debates, both salon and saloon, I will pass out a few helpful hints to all who want to mix it up—on either side.

The easiest way to win any argument is to outshout your opponent. This goes double in Civil War hoedowns, especially if you give your vociferation the Russian pitch. Get a grim twist around your mouth, a stare of wisdom and sufferance in your eyes, then pound the table or bar and holler: "As EVERYBODY knows—" or "It NATURALLY goes without saying—"

This will qualify you as a Two-beer Civil War Debater, second class.

The highball league is a bit rougher, so here we will use

the facts-and-figures routine. Choose for yourself a figure-fact that is of no pertinence but that sounds impressive. And be ready to back it up. The best source in any argument next to the Bible (which really is not about the Civil War) is the *World Almanac*. It usually is handy and it is sacred to most argufiers, despite its errors.

Now fix upon your opponent a gaze that suggests boredom and tolerance and say condescendingly: "Listen, Mac. If you're such an authority on this silly subject, then how many veterans of the Union's Civil War armies became presidents of the United States?"

But watch it. Never give him a chance to reply. He might know the answer. So rattle it off yourself. "As EVERYBODY knows, there were six: Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Harrison, McKinley—and Andrew Johnson was governor of a *military* district."

If you're challenged, ask your host or the bartender, "Where's your *World Almanac*?" If none is available, it's not your fault. For you have succeeded in establishing yourself as an authority on the Civil War and have had the fun of embarrassing your host at the same time.

However, the Two-beer Civil War Debater, second class, and the highball cove strictly are bush operators. No class. If you want to perform in the big time, the Martini or Gibson leagues—well, you'd better go into training. You're liable to bump slap-dab into an historian who knows his stuff. They play the Martini circuit. Writers work the Gibson league.

First off, learn the names of some modern historians who have done the Civil War. Examples: Commager, Coulter, Woodward, Sandburg, Wiley, Freeman, Horn, Lonn—and, above all—*War of the Rebellion, Official Records*. Casually drop the names of your historians here and there. Always call

them by their last names. Be cagey, though. If somebody arches an eyebrow, then retreat from your historians because one of their books might be nigh. This is the moment to fall back on the *Official Records*. Nobody ever has the *Official Records* around the house, so you're safe. Ignore the *World Almanac* in these circles. Plebeian. If anyone dares mention it, just look surprised. Not horrified, but merely flabbergasted. "*That* thing!" you must say. "Really now. Of course, as EVERYBODY knows, its title is willfully misleading and even its *Permit Valuation of Urban Building Authorized, by Class of Building* is wholly unreliable and reactionary."

That will stun your opponent. Now attack. A good opening: "Oh, by the way, I was thumbing through Lonn the other day. Great historian—Lonn. A lady, incidentally. Ella Lonn of Goucher. Which reminds me—did any of you ever hear of the Civil War's bullet-sired baby?"

Note the trick. You've never read Lonn in your life. But, out of all the field, you have picked a woman historian. In the same breath, you have mentioned "bullet-sired baby." That suggests sex. Now, everybody is listening. You have not said that historian Lonn is authority for the story. (She isn't; good heavens no!) But you have established a connection. This is a gimmick that many of today's political slickers have mastered.

You have set your props. So rear back and go into your act. A little smile as though you yourself really do not believe the fantastic story you are about to relate; it's only that you, as an authority on the Civil War, will share some of your research.

"I have never bothered to verify this," you begin. "Not my field. But I understand it has appeared in various journals of medicine." Broad smile and a quick aside, "However, as

EVERYBODY knows, all sorts of weird things crop up in doctors' journals.

"The story begins at the last siege of Vicksburg. There were five campaigns against Vicksburg, as you surely know. Anyway, a Southern maiden—(A broader smile.)

"This maiden was standing on the porch—I mean veranda —on the veranda of her home. A battle was in progress beyond the brow of a hill and she seemingly was out of danger. Incredibly enough, as the story goes, a quote almost spent Minie ball unquote entered the maiden.

"The almost spent Minie ball had passed through the genitals of a Union soldier only a moment before.

"The rest is obvious. Of course, I do not accept it but it's in the records. It so happens that the soldier and the maiden were taken to the same hospital and soon life stirred within her. The baby was normal in every respect. The man and woman were married and lived happily ever after. It presented fascinating legal and medical questions and that is why it has appeared so often in medicine and law records."

Wow! That'll stop 'em. It also will qualify you as a Civil War expert, class of Munchausen. I have heard this fantasy of "the bullet-sired baby" from a dozen sources. I have told it myself with a straight face. It is disheartening to report, but a lot of folks have believed the tale, particularly Yankees, for among the many things that the North never has learned about the South, one is that down here the tongue is used for three purposes: talk, eat and in-cheek.

The first time I heard of the bullet-sired baby I disgraced myself by observing, "I presume the Union soldier was a white man. Otherwise, that's one case of miscegenation that's a humdinger."

So herewith, kind reader, I will pass out to you some am-

munition (facts and opinion) to be used in any Civil War argument; be you the usual timid, reticent and put-upon Yankee trapped at a clambake in Atlanta, or the usual gauche, loud-mouth Southerner who sounds off at a genteel soiree in New York.

¶*The Last Shot:* It was fired by the *C. S. S. Shenandoah* in the Arctic Ocean on June 22, 1865. This Confederate raider was hunting Yankee whalers when she got news that it was all over. She sailed to England and lowered her Confederate Jack at 10 A.M., November 6, 1865, the last Confederate flag to come down.

¶*The Best Hollywood Ending:* General Joseph Orville Shelby and his little Confederate band burying their battle flags in the Rio Grande River on July 4, 1865, and exiling themselves to Mexico.

¶*The Best Generals for Technicolor:* James Ewell Brown (Jeb) Stuart. He rode only beautiful horses. His gray cloak was lined with scarlet. A red flower or a ribbon love-knot always was in his lapel. On his hat was a gilded star and a peacock's plume. He loved singing and banjo music. He rode rings around Union armies, but that wasn't too important. He was flagrantly remiss at Gettysburg where he really was needed, and was killed in action in 1864. Or George Armstrong Custer, the golden boy. His long hair had a golden tint. His uniform was velveteen, tinseled with gold braid. He wore a cavalier hat and a scarlet necktie. But he wasn't much general. He survived the Civil War only to be killed by Indians at the Little Big Horn and this catastrophe gave us that famous bar room picture of *Custer's Last Stand*, by Budweiser.

¶*Best Shots for Technicolor:* Union fleet running the Confederate batteries at Vicksburg; Arkansas' Pat Cleburne's

charge at Franklin, Tennessee, a light snow on the ground and his Irish bagpipes skirling, the bagpipers barefoot and bleeding.

¶*Best Hollywood Heavies:* Confederate Major Henry Wirz, commander of notorious Andersonville Prison and Federal Ivan Vasilevitch Turchininoff alias Col. John Turchin, the Cossack. He burned and pillaged Athens, Alabama. His barbarous conduct brought court martial and dismissal from the army, but later he showed up again as a brigadier general in the United States Volunteers.

¶*The Darling of the Confederacy:* William Pegram, the 23-year-old Colonel of artillery. He was killed in 1865. He was the symbol of Southern chivalry and mothers yearned to hold him in their laps and girls yearned to be held in his lap.

¶*The North's Lover Boy:* General Dan Sickles. Before the war, he killed the son of Francis Scott Key in a woman mixup. He lost a leg at Gettysburg and became our ambassador to Spain. He was called the "Yankee King of Spain" and knew his way around the queen's boudoir even better than he did around the chancelleries of Europe.

¶*Item:* The burning of Atlanta is the best-known burning, but Columbia, S. C., Jackson, Miss., Rome, Ga., and many more towns also were burned by Northern armies. Bellfontaine, Ala., and Cassville, Ga. were destroyed completely and never were rebuilt. The University of Alabama and Virginia Military Institute were scorched. Apologists still insist that Union armies destroyed only military objectives. They never have tried to explain the looting of libraries and art galleries and private homes. Were there many Yankee vandals? We will answer this by asking more questions: Did Germans loot in France? Were they vandals? But did Americans loot in France? Were they just souvenir hunters?

It depends on which side of the fence you're on. Did the Union army spread needless destruction in the South? This too will be answered by questions: Did Germany needlessly bomb England in World War II? Yes? Did we needlessly bomb Germany? No? So let's face it: If discipline did not break down in the invading Union armies then it sure did bend, for vandals and arsonists had a picnic.

¶*The Great Hero:* Abraham Lincoln.

¶*The Best General:* R. E. Lee, hands down.

¶*Lincoln's Favorite General:* Grant.

¶*Grant's Favorite General:* Sheridan.

¶*Sherman's Favorite General:* Sherman.

¶*Lee's Favorite Generals:* Jackson and Longstreet.

¶*Jefferson Davis' Favorite Generals:* Lee and Braxton Bragg.

¶*The Worst Confederate General:* Bragg.

¶*The Worst Northern General:* Don't know. Too much competition.

¶*The North's Favorite Southern General:* Lee.

¶*The South's Favorite Northern General:* Thomas, a Virginian. During the war the South called him a traitor but later found comfort in boasting to the North—"After all, your *best* general was a Southerner."

¶*Southern Generals the North Hated:* Forrest, Morgan, Early and McCausland. General John McCausland burned Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. This was in 1864, and was an announced retaliation for Federal General David Hunter's destruction in the Shenandoah valley.

¶*Northern Generals the South Hated:* Most of them, but Southerners loathed Butler, Banks, Sherman, Sheridan, Sooey Smith and Hunter. Sheridan and Hunter emulated Sherman's "burn-'em-out" tactics.

¶*My Favorite Confederate:* Mark Twain.

¶*My Favorite Yankee:* General Abner Doubleday. He gave us baseball.

¶*Propaganda Weapons: Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe. (And there was a lady with whom Freud and Kinsey could have had a field day.) This book was used by both sides, by the North to show Southern depravity and by the South to show Northern hysteria. Uncle Tom never was deserted by the North. He became The Crusade—"let us die to make men free." The North's next best propaganda ammunition came from Confederate prisons, particularly horrible Andersonville. The South's best propaganda was always at hand: the invading armies. One propaganda tale was that Yankees used poisoned bullets and that Northern soldiers carried handcuffs with which to shackle Confederates.

¶*Item:* Southern looters helped pillage their own cities, particularly Atlanta and Nashville. Confederate vandals hauled 250 wagons of loot out of Atlanta after Sherman burned it.

¶*Damyankee:* The old saw that "damyankee" is one word in the South is truer today than it was thirty years ago. I never heard the expression in my childhood and had I used it I would have been slapped, not in defense of Yankees but because "dam" was a bad word. Historian E. Merton Coulter of the University of Georgia reports the use of damyankee as far back as 1861 and by a slave who, forcibly freed by Unionists, called his benefactors "de d'yam Yankees." H. Allen Smith, ever a prospector for trivia, tells me that "damyankee" easily is as old as Daniel Boone, Yankee born—Southern raised, who reportedly vowed that he didn't aim to live within a hundred miles of a "dam Yankee."

¶*Myth:* The unceasing heroism of Johnny Reb. Sometimes he skedaddled just as fast as Billy Yank. Panic seized Confederates at Missionary Ridge and in several other battles

Johnny Reb was just a scared kid who wanted the-hell-and-gone-out-of-there. These battles include Shiloh, Norris Island, S. C., First Manassas, Malvern Hill, Va., Murfreesboro, Tenn., Winchester, Va., Carthage, Mo., Cedar Creek, Va., Jonesboro, Ga. and many others.

¶*Songs:* The music for *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* came from a Southern folk song: "Say, brothers, will you meet us on Canaan's happy shore?" Out of this came *John Brown's Body* and out of *John Brown's Body* came the Battle Hymn. The two best stanzas of *Dixie* seldom are sung:

Old Missus marry "Will-de-Weaber,"
William was a gay deceber
Look away, look away, etc.
But when he put his arm around 'er
He smiled as fierce as a forty-pounder
Look away, look away, etc.

His face was sharp as a butcher's cleaber,
But dat did not seem to grief 'er,
Look away, look away, etc.
Ole Missus acted de foolish part,
An' died for a man dat broke her heart,
Look away, look away, look away, Dixie Land!

¶*Item:* The only major power that showed any friendship to the United States was Russia. She sent her fleet to New York on a friendship visit. Some folks have mouthed that this proved a common bond between liberty-loving Russians and liberty-loving Yankees. Diddle-prattle! The Czar's heart beat no love for any democracy and the average Russian did not even know, or care, that a civil war was raging in America. The Russian rulers were seeking a chance to get even with England

for the disaster of the Crimean War. England was flirting with the South, so it was to Russia's advantage to make overtures to the North. Things were tense in Europe and if war came, Russia wanted her fleet out of the Black Sea where England could have bottled it up. So the Russian fleet was sent to New York to avoid any possible trap.

¶*Armies:* The senior officer of the Confederate army was General Samuel Cooper, sort of a Chief of Staff. Other four-star generals in the order of their seniority were: Albert S. Johnston, R. E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, P. G. T. Beauregard, Braxton Bragg, E. Kirby-Smith, and John B. Hood. There were four generals-in-chief of the Union armies: Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, Major General George McClellan, Major General Henry Halleck, and finally Lieutenant General Grant.

¶*A Third Act Hero:* Philip Henry Sheridan. This little book grew out of a piece I wrote for *Holiday* magazine and when the article appeared I got several letters berating me for neglecting Gen. Phil Sheridan and demanding to know what I think of him. Not much. One of Grant's boys, he didn't get into the center of the ring until the fight was almost over. He had nice footwork and a fair to middling left jab. But his opponent already was down. All Sheridan had to do was kick him. He did. With 30,000 men in the Valley of Virginia, he had trouble handling Jubal Early with 5,000. Eventually he cleaned out the Valley of Virginia and crisped it brown. Then he wrote his immortal line: "The crow that flies over the Valley of Virginia must henceforth carry his rations with him." Later he was military governor of Texas and a bad one and it was then that he made another immortal crack: "If I owned hell and Texas, I'd rent out Texas and live in hell." You can have him—and that poem about him, too.

¶*Food:* The Northern soldiers were supplied, when possible, with beef, beans and bread. The Southern soldiers ate anything, onions being a standby.

¶*Item:* There were more than 200,000 desertions from the Union army. No records available for Confeds.

¶*The Slickest Diplomatic Trick:* England was outraged because James Mason and John Slidell, Confederate Commissioners to Britain, had been seized aboard the British ship *Trent*, which had sailed from Cuba and not from the United States. Captain Charles Wilkes of the United States *San Jacinto* dared fire a shot across the Englishman's bow to stop her and then to board her and take off the two Confederate passengers. England hit the ceiling. Lincoln and Secretary of State Seward were in a swivet. If they didn't pacify Britain, they could have another war on their hands. But if they apologized to Britain and punished Wilkes, then Northern public opinion would have a fit because Wilkes had become a national hero. Seward pulled a fast one. He did not apologize. He adroitly praised England for protesting the seizure, pointing out that such seizures long had been held illegal by the United States but practiced by England, and then congratulated England for, at long last, recognizing this point of international law. England quieted down. She actually had made her fleet ready and had shipped soldiers to Canada.

¶*Item:* Mrs. Lincoln was Kentuckian to the core, and lace curtain Kentuckian at that. Mrs. Davis' folks came from New Jersey. General Lee's cousin, Sam Lee, commanded Yankee gunboats in Virginia. Federal Attorney General Bates had a son in the Confederate army and Kentuckian John Crittenden had sons in both armies. Brothers Percival Drayton and Thomas Drayton fought against each other in South Carolina. Jeb Stuart's father-in-law, Phillip St. George Cooke, was the

Yankee officer who came nearest to capturing him. In one battle a Confederate soldier actually captured his own father. ¶*Unsung Federal Heroes:* (1) General Samuel Curtis whose victory at Pea Ridge, Arkansas, saved Missouri for the Union.

(2) Secretary of Navy Gideon Welles.

(3) General Franz Sigel who fought for liberalism in Germany before migrating to the United States.

(4) Dorothea Dix, nurse, who did more than any other American to bring our insane out of dungeons and put them in hospitals.

(5) Nat Turner, Negro, whose slave revolts flared spasmodically almost until the end of the Civil War. (The planned revolt of Denmark Vesey, another Negro hero, came years before the Civil War.)

(6) Henry Blow, the last man to own Dred Scott, the slave of *the* decision. Blow emancipated Dred Scott and his family. Scott himself was stupid, shiftless and lazy. He was a porter at a St. Louis hotel after his emancipation. Blow, incidentally, was born in Virginia.

(7) Charles Harvey who, more than any other man, was responsible for the Soo Canal. Over this canal came the Minnesota iron that helped conquer the Confederacy.

(8) William Dempster Hoard, Union soldier and grandfather of the American dairy industry. His newspaper, *Hoard's Dairyman*, campaigned successfully for selective breeding, permanent pastures and silos.

(9) Horatio Alger who wrote 135 books of astonishing drivel. Their sales have been estimated at 250,000,000 copies. Young Horatio broke his arm on his way to a recruiting station to join the Union army. So he drilled a home guard company in Cambridge, Massachusetts until his arm healed. He started down to the recruiting office again and this time

was in a train accident. He made no more attempts to become a soldier and turned to the ministry. The effect of the Reverend Horatio Alger's books upon America was incredible.

(10) Professor Thaddeus Sobieski Coulincourt Lowe, the balloonist who observed Confederate army movements from the air and even photographed them.

(11) General William Rufus Shafter who was awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery during the Civil War. This was the same Shafter, a squashy fat man, who commanded the American army in Cuba during the Spanish American War. History has really given him a hard time because he incurred the displeasure of the almighty journalists who covered that war and tried to run it. Shafter is remembered as a fat dope. As a matter of fact, he was a good general. It was he and not headliners Teddy Roosevelt and Joe Wheeler who won the campaign against Santiago de Cuba. Shafter had a poorly trained and sadly equipped army of 20,000 men. But he moved them more than 1,500 miles by water and landed on an enemy shore in open boats. Then in fifteen days he defeated Spain's army and forced the surrender of Spain's strongest city in the New World. Shafter weighed 310 pounds.

(12) Charles Francis Adams, Minister to Great Britain. England built two ironclads for the Confederacy that could have played hob with Yankee shipping had they ever reached the high seas. Adams tried every diplomatic approach to persuade England's foreign secretary not to allow the ships to sail. He was told that the ironclads would depart within a few days and calmly and firmly he told the foreign secretary of the strongest nation on earth, "It would be superfluous in me to point out to your lordship that this is war." It might have been a monumental bluff, but, anyway, the ships did not sail.

¶*Unsung Southern Heroes:* (1) Lieutenant Bennett Young who slipped a troop of Confederate cavalrymen into Canada and then raided St. Albans, Vermont. It was one of the most daring exploits of the Civil War.

(2) Hinton Helper, author of *The Impending Crisis*, an anti-slavery book that was as serious as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was silly. Helper came of a North Carolina slave-owning family and his book was a scholarly indictment of slavery as an economic institution and of the South as a dupe of this institution. At the outbreak of the Civil War it almost was worth a Southerner's life to own a copy of this book. Southerner Helper dared write to and of his people: "Slaveholders are too lazy and ignorant to write. Southern divines give us elaborate Bible arguments; Southern novelists bore us ad infinitum with pictures of the beatitudes of plantation life; Southern verse-wrights drone out their dactyls or grow ventricious with their turgid heroes, all in defense of slavery." This Southerner said of his South that it "is fast sinking into a state of comparative imbecility and obscurity." He threw at the South such fighting words as "illiterate chevaliers." He pointed out that Dixie could never have its own literature or art or science as long as it supported slavery. "Priest, politician, novelist, bardling," he wrote, support "the 'biblical institution,' and then have their books printed on Northern paper, with Northern type, by Northern artisans, stitched, bound and made ready for the market by Northern industry." This, my friends, was not written by an insolent, ignorant, dollar-grubbing Yankee, but by a North Carolina Tarheel. In later years, some bosom-beaters and pseudo-liberals have tried to portray Helper as a humanitarian and a friend of the Negro. Stuff and nonsense. Helper was a conservative's conservative. He wanted to send the Negroes back to Africa. He was

against slavery for business reasons. It had nothing to do with sentiment, morals or what have you.

(3) Quartermaster General Alexander Lawton who fed his armies on nothing and transported them on less.

(4) General Josiah Gorgas, the ordnance boss. He accomplished in those days what modern military men now advocate, the dispersal of factories. He built ordnance plants all over the South and at the end of the war the Confederates had good small arms. His son was William Crawford Gorgas, surgeon general of the United States Army, who conquered yellow fever in Panama and made the canal possible.

¶*Item:* The South did not like the name of "Confederate States of America," but could not agree on a better one. One suggested name was "League of Nations," inasmuch as each state was a nation.

¶*Books:* Many top-flight generals who survived the war wrote books about it. Exceptions were Lee and Forrest; Lee because he was Lee and Forrest because he couldn't spell. Mark Twain published Grant's book and paid him a whopping fee.

¶*The Greatest Hoax:* Lincoln's Bixby letter. There came to Lincoln a letter from the governor of Massachusetts that Widow Bixby of Boston had lost five sons for the Union. The story is that Lincoln then wrote his famous letter to the woman and addressed it simply to "Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Mass." but it was not sent to the lady. It was sent to Adjutant General Schouler of Massachusetts. He copied the letter. That's his story. Then Schouler raised some money and on Thanksgiving day of 1864 he took the money, some food and the "original Lincoln letter" to Mrs. Bixby. Nobody knows what happened. We don't even know if Schouler stuck around while Mrs. Bixby read the letter, or if she offered him a cup of coffee or a bottle of beer. The original letter was lost.

There was a widow who apparently didn't value a letter from the president of the United States enough to save it. The Bixby letter that we all have read is the *copy* that Schouler said he made. O.K. The joker is that no Widow Bixby lost five sons for the Union. It is true that the five Bixby boys went into the Union army. One was killed at Fredericksburg. Another was killed at Petersburg. Another was captured at Gettysburg, was exchanged and went home. A fourth was taken prisoner and then re-enlisted as a Confederate. The fifth deserted from the army and ran away and went to sea. Be all that as it may, the Bixby letter is a masterpiece of Lincolniana, one of the greatest letters of all time. It brought screams of protest from many of Lincoln's Northern enemies who called it "cheap sympathy." They sneered that while he was oiling up a poor widow his own 21-year-old son, Captain Robert Todd Lincoln, carefully was kept out of action. This was a kick so far below the belt that it would have doubled up a lesser man than President Lincoln. His son Robert was a pretty weak splinter off the old block. Lincoln, or somebody, did keep him out of action. This probably was in deference to Mrs. Lincoln, whose mind already was breaking. I can imagine her screaming right now, "Don't you dare let them shoot at *my* boy." So Lincoln had to decide between his wife's health and the stigma of keeping his own son safe while sending other sons to their death. He stuck by his wife.

¶*Observation:* The United States did *not* win the Civil War, the Confederate States *lost* it because the South was a confederation and never a union. The government was hog-tied by political naïveté; the people followed the Pied Piper of State's Rights into the river and drowned themselves. The home front caved in and pulled the military front in after it. Historian E. Merton Coulter says it best, "The forces leading

to defeat were many but they may be summed up in this one fact: the people did not will hard enough and long enough to win."

¶*War is Hell:* One legend is that Sherman said it in a Mississippi swamp, not while brave men were dying, but when a wagon overturned and snafued his march. In 1880 in a speech at Columbus, Ohio, he said, "There is many a boy here who looks on war as all glory, but, boys, it is all hell." A newspaper paraphrased this into "war is hell." It probably first was said by some caveman but no reporter was around. This and the march through Georgia are the things for which Sherman is remembered. Maybe he didn't say "war is hell" in exactly those words but he did say, "My aim was to whip the rebels, to humble their pride, to follow them to their inmost recesses, and make them fear and dread us. Fear is the beginning of wisdom." Some folks insist that this is the man who really understood and loved the South. He could have been president. Thank the good Lord we were spared that.

¶*Prisons:* They were horrible on both sides. The Union's propaganda machinery milked the South's prison story for all it was worth and executed Major Henry Wirz, commander of Andersonville prison. Wirz' side of the story has never been publicized. There was no prisoner problem as long as both sides observed the exchange cartel. Then both sides began breaking it and Grant finally threw it out, contending that every Confederate prisoner who was exchanged took up arms again and that the North could afford to lose soldiers better than the South. About 190,000 Union soldiers were imprisoned. About 30,000 of them died in captivity. The South couldn't feed her own folks, much less prisoners. But here is something you don't hear much about. More than 200,000 Confederate soldiers were imprisoned and about

26,000 of them died in captivity. Yet the North had plenty of food.

¶*Villain or Hero?* Clement Laird Vallandigham, Ohio congressman, the despised "Copperhead." He contended that the Republican Party was the arch-villain of the whole shoddy drama. He, too, was for the Union and thought it could be saved by compromise. Accused of expressing treasonable sympathies, he was tried by a military commission and imprisoned. Shrewdly, Lincoln banished him to the Confederacy. Vallandigham made his way to Canada and kept daring the United States to give him a fair trial. He defied the ban against him and returned to Ohio at the height of the war and to somewhat of a triumph. The Republican and military big wigs tried to ignore him. He simply was too hot to handle. In retrospect, some folks insist that Vallandigham was right all along. I don't know enough about this to have an opinion, and don't intend to read up on it. Right now, I don't care.

¶*Items:* Vermin in the soldiers' hair and beards caused more disease than the medical authorities realized. The Southern soldier prized a piece of soap almost as highly as his gun. He preferred a knife to a bayonet. The richest Confederates were in the ranks and were not officers at all. The uniforms of a New Orleans company cost $20,000 and its flag cost $750. The Confeds didn't like to wear caps and insisted on felt hats. It was a matter of dignity. They didn't mind going barefooted when they had to, but they raised all get-out if they had to go bareheaded. Every man tried to grow a beard, partly because beards were fashionable and partly because a beard helped keep the face warm. Those who had trouble sprouting hair rubbed Bellingham's Stimulating Unguent on their skin. Among the Confederates, the mythical Secesh soldier was not "Johnny Reb" at all, but "Bolivar Ward." I know not

whence came the name, but for no apparent reason the soldiers often would yell, "Where's Bolivar?" Like Elmer or Kilroy.

¶*The Outstanding Scapegoat:* Jefferson Davis, the forgotten man. Two myths followed him to his grave—that he tried to escape in his wife's dress and that he was a party in the Lincoln conspiracy. Both are preposterous. He was imprisoned after the war, was never brought to trial. The North didn't dare give him a trial, knowing that a trial would establish that secession was not unconstitutional, that there had been no "rebellion," and that the South had got a raw deal. Davis was kept in chains part of the time he was in prison. The bond for his release was signed by Horace Greeley and Jerrit Smith, who once had condemned all Southerners to hell. The North reviled Greeley for signing the bond. Davis lived 22 years after his release and visited England and France. In France he snubbed Louis Napoleon because that Napoleon had followed a double-handed policy with the South. It took Davis three years to write his history of the Confederacy, a ponderous and heavy tome. Mississippi wanted to return him to the United States Senate but he refused to ask the United States for a "pardon," demanding that the government either offer him a pardon or give him a trial or admit that he had been unjustly dealt with. He died "unpardoned" by a government that was leery of giving him a public hearing. It was Davis who said, "The principle [State's Rights] for which we contended is bound to reassert itself, though it may be at another time and in another form."

¶*My Favorite Incident:* The great locomotive chase. It was in 1862. A band of Union spies under James Andrews, a Kentuckian, boarded a Georgia railroad train as passengers. The train stopped at a terminal and passengers and crew went

inside to eat. The Federals scampered aboard the locomotive and took off, balling-the-jack for Chattanooga about a hundred miles north. They cut telegraph wires, set bridges afire, tore up tracks and just played the devil generally. William A. Fuller, conductor of the train, let out a whoop when, eating his breakfast in the station, he saw his train disappear in the distance. A man could lose his job for losing his train. He yelled for the folks to get help and then he jumped on a handcar and took off after the robbers. Alone and pumping up a storm, he hightailed it up the road until he found another engine on a siding. But the engine was headed in the wrong direction. Anyway, he scampered aboard, threw it in reverse and lit out, speeding over burning bridges and around bends. He finally picked up some Confederate soldiers and they overtook the Federals and captured them. There were twenty-two spies in the raid. Eight of them were hanged. They had more guts than brains. Fuller is one of my heroes, the little man on the handcar. I wish some Southern town where those not-too-pretty statues of Johnny Reb (usually made of Vermont marble) guard our courthouses would erect a different kind of Confederate monument—a man on a handcar, his tongue hanging out as he pumped away up a railroad track, not for State's Rights or secession or slavery, but to save his job.

¶*Another Favorite Incident:* The crew of the Confederate *William H. Webb*, a 200-foot low pressure steamer, was at Shreveport, Louisiana, on the Red River, when they heard that Confederate armies were surrendering. These boys would have none of it. They camouflaged the *Webb* as a cargo craft, flew the Stars and Stripes at half mast in mourning for Lincoln and headed out for open sea, more than 300 miles away. No Yankee ship challenged them in the Red River and they

slipped by a whole flotilla. They wheeled into the Mississippi River, went ashore and cut the telegraph lines to New Orleans. Then they shielded the lights on the *Webb*, tied down the safety valve and headed for the Gulf of Mexico. They made it safely by one Union warship after another. Finally they were identified and started shooting their way through. The Yankees up and down the river had a fit and the story spread that Jefferson Davis was aboard the *Webb*, that her pilot was John Wilkes Booth and that Confederate gold was in her hold. The *Webb* ran up a Confederate battle flag and actually fought her way beyond New Orleans where she finally was captured. Her crew scuttled her and took to the woods.

¶*Observation:* The South did not get over the effects of the Civil War until World War II, and still is not over it entirely. It took eighty years. A war stomped the South into the ground and it took another war to pick her up.

¶*Histories:* Two of the best history books of the Civil War are among the most recent ones, *The Blue and the Gray* by Henry Steele Commager of Columbia University, and *The Confederate States of America* by E. Merton Coulter of the University of Georgia.

¶*The Rebel Yell:* The late Douglas Southall Freeman, R. E. Lee's biographer, insisted that the Rebel Yell had a "cumulative effect"—a long, piercing "Oooooooo-eeeeeee." I wouldn't know. As a reporter in my youth I covered several Confederate reunions and regretfully do I report that most of the veterans had to be rehearsed in the yell. I got the impression that during the Civil War there were probably as many kinds of Rebel Yells as there were Rebels. But after a few toddies the veterans would shift their tobacco chaws and cut loose on what seemed to me a spontaneous yell. It sounded like

"Creeeee-ooooo! Yeeee-oooow." The Confederates called the Rebel yell "The Holler," and it simply was a hunter's cry—the excitement and surprise of a hunter whose best coon dog has jumped a fox. The veterans I watched at Confederate reunions not only enjoyed yelling and toddying, but they were the best behind-pinchers I ever saw. They really gave Southern belle bottoms a fit. A stiff toddy, a holler, a caper with a pretty young girl and then a pinch—that was the routine. It would have done your heart good although it was mighty rough on the daughters and granddaughters of the Confederacy. Never will I forget a girl in Little Rock, Arkansas. She had on crinoline and moonlight was in her hair and magnolias were in her dreams and corn likker was on her breath. She was at a Confederate reunion to entertain the Old Soldiers who didn't want to fade away. And she had done her best, dancing and laughing and feeding them and fondling them. But as the night wore on I saw her in a corner, rubbing her Manassas that had been sorely pinched and I heard her say, "Sometimes I'm *glad* those ol' Yankees won."

¶¶*A Note to the Reader:* I will not answer acrimonious letters. I will not answer the challenges of my sources unless the complainants list their sources for challenging me. I will ignore Southerners who call me a renegade, Southerners and Yankees who call me a biased hillbilly, a Jim Crowing poll-taxer, a reactionary, a fascist, a Communist or an egghead. Don't write me that line that you learned your Civil War history at your grandma's knee. Grandma's knee is a rightly nice place to pray, but it's a poor place to learn history.


John Alan Maxwell